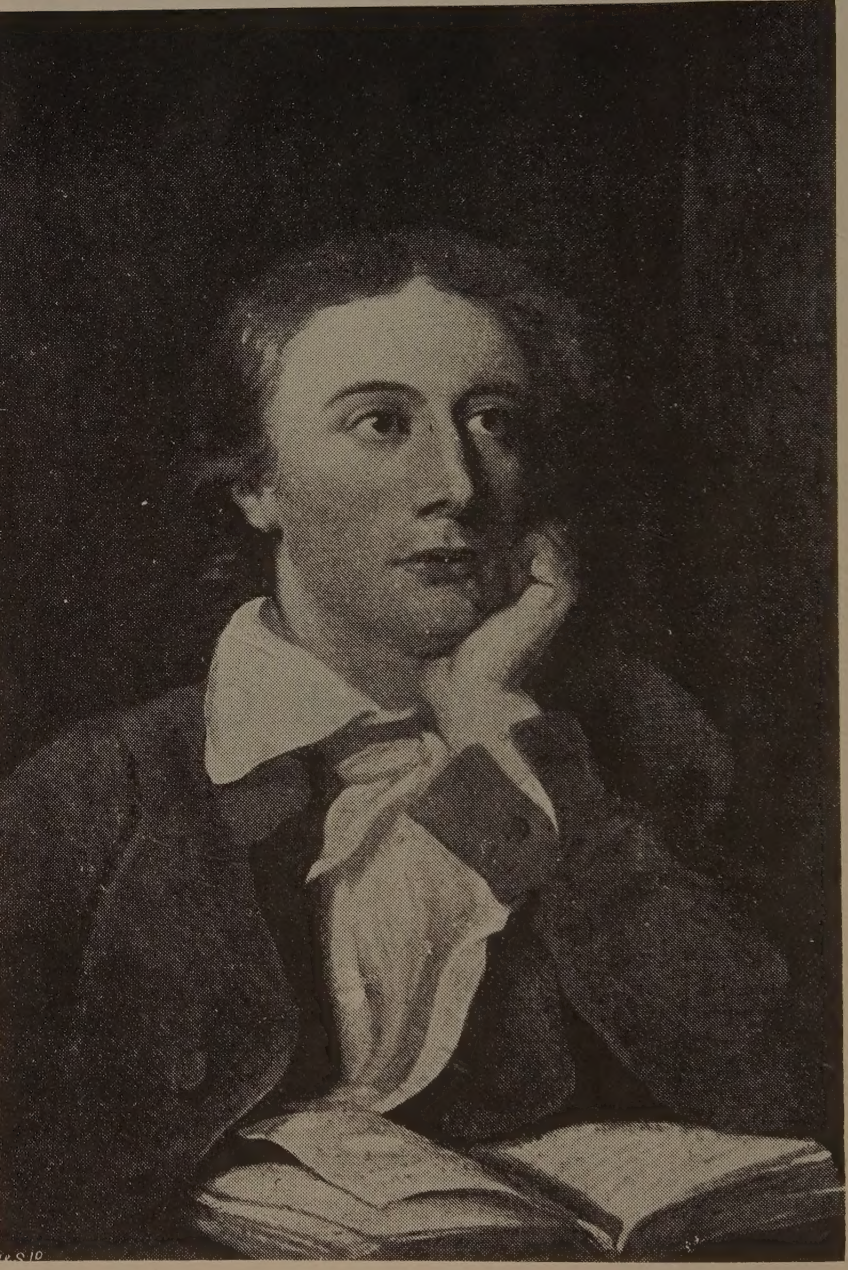
The Poets and the Poetry of the Nineteenth Century



John Keats

The Poets and the Poetry of the Nineteenth Century

John Keats

to

Edward, Lord Lytton

Edited by

ALFRED H. MILES

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In the prefatory note of the first edition this work (1891) the Editor invited criticism with a view to the improvement of future editions. Several critics responded to this appeal, and their valuable suggestions have been considered in preparing this re-issue. In some cases the text has been revised and the selection varied; in others, additions have been made to complete the representation. The biographical and bibliographical matter has been brought up to date.—A.H.M.

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PREFATORY.

"FROM John Keats to Lord Lytton" marks the limits of a period remarkable rather for the number and the variety of its lesser luminaries than for the all-eclipsing brilliance of any one particular star.

Keats may be said to have brought to a close the second splendid period of nineteenth-century poetry, and from his day until the rise of that of Tennyson and Browning, space was occupied by a constellation of lesser lights, some of whom, indeed, shone with independent fire, while others, influenced in some degree by the brilliance of their predecessors, more or less reflected borrowed rays.

That period can scarcely be said to have been barren which produced such poets as Hartley Coleridge, Tom Hood, William Barnes, Charles Wells, James Clarence Mangan, and Thomas Lovell Beddoes, nor void of interest which gave birth to such men as William Motherwell, George Darley, Lord Macaulay, Sir Henry Taylor, W. M. Praed, R. H. Horne, R. S. Hawker, and Thomas Wade. That some of these were as independent as any of the greater poets they succeeded few will deny, and that some of them have yet to receive the full measure of appreciation which is their due many will be ready to admit. How far their work may retain its interest

for later generations, or what position may be assigned to them by those who look back upon it after local influences have ceased to operate, happily it is not for us to predict.

The Editor's obligations in connection with this volume are very numerous. His thanks are specially due to Mr. Buxton Forman, whose text of Keats has been followed, for invaluable help in dealing with the work of Charles Wells, R. H. Horne, and Thomas Wade; for one sonnet of the latter's never before published; and for several which have not previously appeared in volume form: also to Messrs. Kegan Paul & Co.,—whose generous response to frequent applications in connection with this work has involved the Editor in permanent indebtedness,—for permission to include selections from the works of Sir Henry Taylor, William Barnes, and Robert Stephen Hawker. The Editor would also express his deep sense of the kind help he has received from Dr. Garnett, Mr. Austin Dobson, Mr. Samuel Waddington, and Mr. James Ashcroft Noble. Thanks are due also to Mr. Edmund Gosse for his kind permission to reprint several lyrics from his charming edition of the works of Thomas Lovell Beddoes in the Temple Library Series.

A. H. M.

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John Keats

to

Edward, Lord Lytton

John Keats.

1795—1821.

John Keats was born of undistinguished parentage, in October, 1795, in Moorfields, London. The actual day seems uncertain, the 29th and the 31st being both quoted by authorities. His mother, Frances Jennings, was the daughter of a well-to-do livery-stable proprietor, and had married her father's assistant and eventual successor in the business, Thomas Keats, who was of Devon or of Cornish blood. John was the eldest child, and of four others three (George, Thomas, and a sister named Fanny) survived to figure in his life-story.

The three brothers were educated at Enfield, where the Rev. John Clarke kept an excellent and reputable school. Between John Keats and the schoolmaster's son, Charles Cowden Clarke, a close friendship was soon struck up, and the latter has enriched our knowledge of the poet's early days with sundry anecdotes which represent him as a leader in all pranks and adventures, impulsive, indomitable, as generous as he was high-spirited, and, in spite of the morbid sensitiveness that made him miserable over supposed affronts, without a trace of meanness or vindictiveness. The seeds of the consumption that carried him off were lying dormant and unsuspected, but other troubles came early upon him. In April, 1804, his father was killed by a fall

from his horse, and, in February, 1810, his mother died, bitterly mourned by the young lad, who had been unremitting in his vigils by the sick bed. The close of the year saw him apprenticed by his guardian, a Mr. Abbey, to a surgeon at Edmonton. Before his five years' apprenticeship had expired he was off to London to walk the hospitals. But though his student notes at St. Thomas's bore evidence to his application, his thoughts were oftener in Arcady than in Lambeth. "The other day," he was once heard to say, "during the lecture, there came a sunbeam into the room, and with it a whole troop of creatures floating in the ray; and I was off with them to Oberon and fairy-land." After some experience of surgical practice at Guy's, he laid aside the lancet with a shudder, convinced that he had mistaken his vocation. His portion of the maternal legacy of £8,000 relieved him of pecuniary anxieties as to the future, but it probably helped to endorse the state of indolence and indefiniteness which characterised him about this period. A literary acquaintance or two brought many others, and finally we see him figuring in a group which included Leigh Hunt, Shelley, Hazlitt, Lamb, and the artists Haydon and Joseph Severn.

By this time poetry had enthralled him, and his own rare genius began to bud into expression. Signs, indeed, had not been lacking even from his school days. Before he left Enfield his mind was steeped in the mythology of the old Greeks—Lemprière's Classical Dictionary was treasure-trove to him. Often, after school hours, he might have been seen sitting in a quiet corner with the volume, absorbed in the loves of Aphrodite or the feats of Heracles,

or following in the foam-track of the Argonauts through Euxine and Atlantic seas. His rich and active fancy clothed and coloured the bare narratives, and there began those marvellous day-dreams which afterwards took shape in forms of fitting beauty. Through Cowden Clarke, he also made acquaintance with Spenser's "Faerie Queen," in which he absolutely revelled; its influence and that of Chaucer is conspicuous in many of his earlier effusions.

Early in 1817, through a friendly publisher, Charles Ollier by name, Keats put forth his first volume. In spite of the crudities and mannerisms, which evoked much contemptuous ridicule in certain quarters, it showed plenty of incipient grace. In the opening piece, "I stood tip-toe upon a little hill," composed after a delightful summer day's ramble over Hampstead Heath, and also in the closing poem, "Sleep and Poetry," the abounding wealth of expression and play of imagery are already noticeable. Such sonnets as the one composed after looking into Chapman's "Homer" have all the abrupt rush of an inspiration, and there is a sprightly charm about another, "On the Grasshopper and Cricket," written in Leigh Hunt's little cottage on Hampstead Heath, one frosty December evening. Even in the "Epistles," with their colloquial prattle, Keats slid instinctively into allusions to natural objects, dashing off hastily, but with the skill of a master-hand, little vignettes as truthful as they are delicate.

In April of the following year, Keats dated from Teignmouth the preface to another and more ambitious volume. This was "Endymion," which was composed partly at Margate, partly at Hampstead. It is based upon the old legend of the beautiful

shepherd lad who was loved by Cynthia, the moon goddess. But the outline is almost obscured by the wealth of decoration: the plot and purpose of the poem by a superabundance of metaphor and simile. The chief feature is the loving familiarity of Keats with the characters and incidents of the Greek myths. In that world of shy nymphs and shaggy satyrs, of tritons and nereids riding over blue seas, and bacchanals with their noise and mirth and wild carousal, the young poet walked as through the fields and woods of his own rural Hampstead. Most readers, glancing through the poem for the first time, follow with difficulty the thin thread of narrative running through the prodigal luxuriance of ornament. An underlying meaning, however, there is, and by no one has it been interpreted more clearly than by the late Mrs. F. M. Owen. Under the guise of the Carian herd-boy seeking through trackless woods, and stony fastnesses, and bitter deeps, his half-revealed love, is pourtrayed the youthful soul in pursuit of its ideal. Nothing adds to the charm of the poem more than the exquisite aptness of epithet that mark his allusions to Nature. It is the one point in which Keats stands unsurpassed in English poetry. Indeed, his treatment of Nature is intrinsically different to that of his chief contemporaries. He loved and interpreted her, says one of his latest biographers, "more for her own sake, and less for the sake of sympathy which the human mind can read into her with its own workings and aspirations. He had grown up neither like Wordsworth under the spell of lake and mountain, nor in the glow of millennial dreams like Shelley, but, London-born and Middlesex-bred, was gifted, as if by

some mysterious birthright, with a delighted insight into all the beauties, and sympathy with all the life, of the woods and fields." This recalls the remark of one personally acquainted with Keats that "his countenance had an expression as if he had been looking on some glorious sight."

The joyousness of natural life permeated his whole being. It was in this that Keats had affinity with the old Greeks—not in his literary expression which but rarely displays a classic severity. Indeed, all his wonderful knowledge of Greek lore was gained through translations; of the original language he knew nothing.

The surprise of a town-bred child in its first field of buttercups, and the rapture of a lover gazing on the face of his mistress, represent, if combined, the attitude of Keats towards Nature. His passionate admiration is too warm, too vehement, for studied phrases; he cannot pause to weigh his words; all things suggest their own distinctive terms of praise: "globèd peonies" and "level lilies" of the river; "sweet peas on tip-toe for a flight," and "honeysuckles full of clear bee wine;" the golden breath of sunset "misting in the west," and the dawn-light upon the "million poutings of the brine." It is not to be wondered at, that, amid this exuberance, there should be a few lines ill-considered and slip-shod.

It was an axiom with Keats that "poetry should surprise by a fine excess." Probably his own natural preference fathered such a rule. Whenever he took up the pen, scenes and shapes of beauty crowded so upon his gaze, that the living thought as it struggled through them had much ado to retain its distinctness.

Hence that tendency to multiply word-pictures, lovely indeed, but often uncalled-for and embarrassing, which has drawn such protest from critics of the precision school. In poems of sentiment and reflection perhaps the heaping up of imagery is pardonable, but in certain of his narrative poems he turns aside too deliberately to draw analogies, sparkling but superfluous. These, like moss-grown rocks in a river-bed whose presence "makes a sweet trouble," may win our admiration, but they hinder the flow of the stream and gather about them too often the mere froth of a chafing fancy.

"I have loved the principle of beauty in all things," he once said, and surely no poet ever exemplified his dictum more clearly. Whether it is in catching and presenting what has been called the *magic* of Nature, or in conjuring up pictures from the old realms of myth and of romance, or in the entranced contemplation of some human face or form, Keats stands forth as the poet of Beauty. The "magic" of Nature is surely caught in such lines as these on morning:

> . . . "rain-scented eglantine
> Gave temperate sweets to that well-wooing sun;
> The lark was lost in him; cold springs had run
> To warm their chilliest bubbles in the grass;
> Man's voice was on the mountains; and the mass
> Of nature's lives and wonders pulsed tenfold
> To feel this sunrise and its glories old;"—

or in the delicate but vivid touch in these from Lamia"—

> "There she stood,
> About a young bird's flutter from a wood,
> Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread,
> By a clear pool."

To Keats poetry meant no "criticism of life," no

attempt to cope with its "obstinate questionings" and "blank misgivings," no searching after abstract truth. "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," he cries, and turns his back on metaphysical enquiry. Science he abhorred as an intruder on the fairy world of Imagination. It has even been charged against him, that he was absolutely indifferent to the future of humanity and the progress of the race. Certainly he did not interest himself, as Shelley did, in remedial schemes, nor, to use his own fine phrase, did he probably realise, as Shelley realised, "the giant agony of the world;" but for individual suffering he had the tenderest compassion, and any real case of injustice or oppression that came under his notice was enough to make his eyes flash and his hands clench. To these traits, his letters and the testimony of those who knew him bear ample witness. The effeminacy and languishing softness which mark the prominent figures in so many of his poems do not seem to have characterised him as a man; indeed, the puling, lily-livered, flattery-fed Johnny Keats of Byron's supercilious imagining had no existence save on paper. But loftiness of moral purpose and "high-souled seriousness" (as distinguished from mere artistic earnestness) can scarcely be said to inspire the work he has left behind. To the poetry of Keats men are not likely to go in their deeper moods; the troubled, the perplexed, the unrestful will find but little in it for their need. He does not attempt to exhort, or to direct, or to restrain. But he has beauty to offer, and passion, and love. We approach his poetry as we would some fair-built temple of the Paphian queen, where flowers and frankincense are heaped on stainless altars, amid

the flutter of white raiment and the wings of doves, and dreamy content mingles with desire, while outside with indistinct murmur the great sea of the world's strife moans round the marble stairway far below.

Keats came back from a knapsack tour with a friend through Scotland, to find his "Endymion" being roughly handled by the reviewers. The savage taunts of an anonymous writer in *Blackwood*, probably Lockhart, and the less spiteful but equally unappreciative comments of the *Quarterly Review*, seemed enough to wreck his frail venture.

The old theory that attributed his early death to these malignant criticisms has long been proved a fallacy. Keats was of too sturdy and confident a nature to be more than temporarily affected by such attacks. He himself saw clearly enough the faults of the poem, and rightly judged that the blemishes of spontaneity contained more promise than the polished commonplaces of other young writers.

The advance shown in his next volume, published in July 1820, was remarkable. This contained "The Eve of St. Agnes," with its wonderful colour, fervour, and mediæval charm; "Isabella; or, the Pot of Basil," an idealised version of one of Boccaccio's stories; the noble fragment of "Hyperion;" "Lamia," a tale of ancient Corinth, and the exquisite "Odes."

In writing "Hyperion," the influence of Milton was at once an inspiration and an embarrassment. The magnificent and colossal delineation of Saturn and his giant followers, which even Byron pronounced to be "as sublime as Æschylus," owed much undoubtedly to a study of our great religious epic. But with Milton's spirit, Keats had caught Milton's

tendency to involved expression, and it was professedly on account of this defect (though other and more weighty reasons might be assigned), that he decided to leave the poem unfinished. A later attempt to re-cast the poem in the form of "a Vision" was far less happy, though some of the passages in it are magnificent. Curiously enough, this second draft was long held to be the original one, until Mr. Colvin's careful researches confirmed the suspicions of Dr. Garnett and other competent critics.

In "Hyperion," we have the old characteristic wealth of expression, as for instance, where Enceladus is depicted as surveying the dethroned gods in their gloomy retreat:—

> "He looked upon them all,
> And in each face he saw a gleam of light,
> But splendider in Saturn's, whose hoar locks
> Shone like the bubbling foam about a keel
> When the prow sweeps into a midnight cove."

But the largeness of conception, and the startling force of passion and energy, contrast strikingly with the ornate sentimentalism of his earlier poems. Even here, however, Keats maintains the importance of "the principle of Beauty," and pointedly illustrates it in the provision of fate that the primeval gods shall be superseded by those of Olympus, those of huge bulk and strength by those of sweetness and grace even the fearful splendour of Hyperion by the gentle radiance of Apollo. This inevitable change is acknowledged in the speech of one of the assembled Titans, who reminds his fellows that—

> . . . "'tis the eternal law
> That first in beauty should be first in might."

As they, the primeval gods, are an advance on the old blind forces of Chaos whom they dispossessed,—

> "So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,
> *A power more strong in beauty*, born of us
> And fated to excel us, as we pass
> In glory that old Darkness."

Two other poems, which have won admiring praise in high places, are likewise fragments, the strain in each ceasing abruptly: these are "The Eve of St. Mark," with its monkish lore and ghostly shadow-play, and the opening verse of an Ode to Maia. The dramatic attempt of "King Stephen," also, got no further than a few pages. "Otho the Great" was completed about August 1819. That year was the most marvellous in Keats's career; "St. Agnes' Eve," "Lamia," "Hyperion," and the odes "To Psyche," "To a Nightingale," "To Autumn," and probably that "On a Grecian Urn"—a brilliant galaxy—being then composed. The ill-spent industry of "Cap and Bells," frivolous as a toy-symphony, belongs to a later date.

The Ode to Autumn—where all that is lovely in orchard and garden, wheat-field and river-side, beneath a September sky, is laid under contribution in lines of absolute beauty—was inspired by a quiet walk through the stubble-fields around Winchester. The stanzas "To a Nightingale," were scribbled in pencil one May morning in the garden at Hampstead, after hearing the shy singer, who had built her nest in one of the bushes. With the Ode to Psyche Keats admitted he had taken special pains, but artistic effort has not chilled the glow of amorous passion which pervades it, and which mingles, in the Ode on a Grecian Urn, with the deep human pathos throbbing beneath the classic picturing.

We may refer here to the frequent occurrence of that strange note of weird sadness, easily recognisable but difficult to define, which Matthew Arnold traced to the lingering influence of the Celtic blood in us. We have it in "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," and in the "Ode on Melancholy," but also in poems dealing with nature, *e.g.* in "Endymion"—

> . . . "undescribèd sounds
> That come a-swooning over hollow grounds,
> And wither drearily on barren moors;"—

or the passage in "Hyperion," where he likens the dejected group of fallen Titans to

> . . . "a dismal cirque
> Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,
> When the chill rain begins at shut of eve
> In dull November.

In 1819 Keats fell deeply in love with a young lady, who, with her mother, had come to live next door to his residence in Wentworth Place. This was a Miss Fanny Brawne, and neighbourly intimacy soon ripened into an engagement. But his passion seems to have brought Keats as much anguish as joy, for he was constantly haunted by the all too prophetic sense of coming separation. Pecuniary troubles, also, loomed in the near future; his Scotch tour had overtaxed his health; and weary watchings by the bedside of his dying brother Tom had contributed to depress him.

June 1820 saw the poet broken down in mind and body. The loving nursing of his betrothed softened but could not dispel his sufferings. He was advised to go abroad before the chills of autumn set in. Shelley wrote from Pisa inviting him; but it was finally arranged that he should go to Rome under

the care of Joseph Severn, whose loyal ministrations, little less than heroic, have endeared him to all who know the last sad chapter in the poet's story. On the 18th September the ship left London, and before the last February sunrise blushed over the white walls of the Eternal City the young singer had been laid to rest. He had suffered terribly from bodily exhaustion, but far more from that sense of separation—unrelieved by any sure hope of immortality—from the woman whom so ardently he loved. The thought of leaving her was, he said, like darkness coming over him. His heart yearned, too, after the beauties of the world he was called upon to quit so early. He had dwelt so lovingly upon its charms, had watched so closely its changes and renewals, that, brave-hearted though he was, he could not calmly bid it a farewell. As it was with another sufferer and Nature-lover, Richard Jefferies, so it was with Keats: the thought that the woods would burgeon, and the meadow grass thicken with flowers, and the cry of dove and cuckoo ring again in their accustomed haunts—and he himself be not there to see, to hear, and to record them all—filled him with anguish. His distress broke forth unreservedly in his conversation and letters. "It surprises me," he wrote, "that the human heart is capable of containing and bearing so much misery." And long before the "slope of green access" received him, he used to say that he could already feel the daisies growing over him. He sleeps in the quiet Protestant Cemetery, made famous in a beautiful verse of Shelley's sublime tribute and lament, "Adonais." Sixty years after, Severn was laid beside him.

The life of Keats has been written many times since Lord Houghton, then Mr. Monckton Milnes, undertook the task of editing and arranging the collected materials. Criticism and admiration have gone hand in hand. The cloud which had obscured his fame was, indeed, lifting at the time of his death, and his influence has survived in the writings of some of our foremost Victorian poets.

It is a disputed question whether, had his life been prolonged, his genius would have broadened and developed. If we hold, with Mr. Courthope, that the true force of that genius lay in its faculty of picturesque and sculpturesque expression, with the attendant limitations of such, we are constrained to doubt whether its actual achievements could in time have been surpassed. But as we get to feel the reserve of power which is perceptible in much of Keats's literary correspondence, and which Matthew Arnold justly deemed so significant, his manifest impatience also of anything like a "middle flight," we find ground for belief that the masterful spirit as it attained maturity would have reflected in song its mellow greatness as in earlier days it had reflected its zest for the beautiful. What has been termed "his sensuous receptivity," and what Keats himself called his "exquisite sense of the luxurious," found expression in verse so genuinely characteristic of warm emotional youth, so artless and spontaneous, so free from any admixture of evil thought, that we see no reason why advancing years might not have witnessed a continued correspondence between the ripening genius and the quality of its productions. There are unmistakable signs in his later work of increasing strength solidity, and robustness; the

flimsy beauty of his earlier effusions becomes nobler and more chastened. Shelley, who had but small praise for his fellow-poet's previous work, was struck with the late-born fragment of "Hyperion;" "it is certainly," he wrote, "an astonishing piece of writing, and gives me a conception of Keats which I confess I had not before." Moreover, Keats himself was his own critic, a shrewd and most unsparing one; and there was good omen in the unaffected dissatisfaction with which he regarded some of his best writings.

But there is compensation for us even in the abrupt close of his brief career. Like the eager lover pictured on that Grecian urn, he lives before us in the out-reaching attitude of hope and youth, passionful, expectant,

"For ever panting, and for ever young."

Scarcely, then, would we exchange so bright an image for one of sober fruition. Above this fresh-voiced singer the boughs of Arcady keep green their leaves; and behind him the golden morning grows from more to more. And Love is there, and Beauty, for ever flying and for ever followed. Change cannot touch nor failure darken that suspended joy. Age will not chill the ardour of pursuit, nor will achievement cloy the palate of desire.

HORACE G. GROSER.

"I STOOD TIP-TOE UPON A LITTLE HILL."

1816—1817.

JOHN KEATS.

"Places of nestling green for Poets made."
STORY OF RIMINI.

I STOOD tip-toe upon a little hill,
The air was cooling, and so very still,
That the sweet buds which with a modest pride
Pull droopingly, in slanting curve aside,
Their scantly-leav'd, and finely-tapering stems,
Had not yet lost those starry diadems
Caught from the early sobbing of the morn.
The clouds were pure and white as flocks new-shorn,
And fresh from the clear brook; sweetly they slept
On the blue fields of heaven, and then there crept
A little noiseless noise among the leaves,
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves:
For not the faintest motion could be seen
Of all the shades that slanted o'er the green.

There was wide wand'ring for the greediest eye,
To peer about upon variety;
Far round the horizon's crystal air to skim,
And trace the dwindled edgings of its brim;
To picture out the quaint, and curious bending
Of a fresh woodland alley, never-ending;
Or by the bowery clefts, and leafy shelves,
Guess where the jaunty streams refresh themselves.
I gazed awhile, and felt as light, and free
As though the fanning wings of Mercury
Had play'd upon my heels: I was light-hearted,
And many pleasures to my vision started;

So I straightway began to pluck a posey
Of luxuries bright, milky, soft and rosy.

A bush of May-flowers with the bees about them;
Ah, sure no tasteful nook would be without them;
And let a lush laburnum oversweep them,
And let long grass grow round the roots to keep them
Moist, cool and green; and shade the violets,
That they may bind the moss in leafy nets.

A filbert hedge with wild briar overtwin'd,
And clumps of woodbine taking the soft wind
Upon their summer thrones; there too should be
The frequent chequer of a youngling tree,
That with a score of light green brethren shoots
From the quaint mossiness of aged roots:
Round which is heard a spring-head of clear waters
Babbling so wildly of its lovely daughters
The spreading blue-bells: it may haply mourn
That such fair clusters should be rudely torn
From their fresh beds, and scatter'd thoughtlessly
By infant hands, left on the path to die.

Open afresh your round of starry folds,
Ye ardent marigolds!
Dry up the moisture from your golden lids,
For great Apollo bids
That in these days your praises should be sung
On many harps, which he has lately strung;
And when again your dewiness he kisses,
Tell him, I have you in my world of blisses:
So haply when I rove in some far vale,
His mighty voice may come upon the gale.

Here are sweet peas, on tip-toe for a flight:
With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white,

And taper fingers catching at all things,
To bind them all about with tiny rings.

Linger awhile upon some bending planks
That lean against a streamlet's rushy banks,
And watch intently Nature's gentle doings:
They will be found softer than ring-dove's cooings.
How silent comes the water round that bend;
Not the minutest whisper does it send
To the o'erhanging sallows: blades of grass
Slowly across the chequer'd shadows pass.
Why, you might read two sonnets, ere they reach
To where the hurrying freshnesses aye preach
A natural sermon o'er their pebbly beds;
Where swarms of minnows show their little heads,
Staying their wavy bodies 'gainst the streams,
To taste the luxury of sunny beams
Temper'd with coolness. How they ever wrestle
With their own sweet delight, and ever nestle
Their silver bellies on the pebbly sand.
If you but scantily hold out the hand,
That very instant not one will remain;
But turn your eye, and they are there again.
The ripples seem right glad to reach those cresses,
And cool themselves among the em'rald tresses;
The while they cool themselves, they freshness give,
And moisture, that the bowery green may live:
So keeping up an interchange of favours,
Like good men in the truth of their behaviours.
Sometimes goldfinches one by one will drop
From low-hung branches; little space they stop;
But sip, and twitter, and their feathers sleek;
Then off at once, as in a wanton freak:
Or perhaps, to show their black, and golden wings,
Pausing upon their yellow flutterings.

Were I in such a place, I sure should pray
That nought less sweet, might call my thoughts away,
Than the soft rustle of a maiden's gown
Fanning away the dandelion's down;
Than the light music of her nimble toes
Patting against the sorrel as she goes.
How she would start, and blush, thus to be caught
Playing in all her innocence of thought.
O let me lead her gently o'er the brook,
Watch her half-smiling lips, and downward look;
O let me for one moment touch her wrist;
Let me one moment to her breathing list;
And as she leaves me may she often turn
Her fair eyes looking through her locks auburne.
What next? A tuft of evening primroses,
O'er which the mind may hover till it dozes;
O'er which it well might take a pleasant sleep,
But that 'tis ever startled by the leap
Of buds into ripe flowers; or by the flitting
Of diverse moths, that aye their rest are quitting;
Or by the moon lifting her silver rim
Above a cloud, and with a gradual swim
Coming into the blue with all her light.
O Maker of sweet poets, dear delight
Of this fair world, and all its gentle livers;
Spangler of clouds, halo of crystal rivers,
Mingler with leaves, and dew and tumbling streams,
Closer of lovely eyes to lovely dreams,
Lover of loneliness, and wandering,
Of upcast eye, and tender pondering!
Thee must I praise above all other glories
That smile us on to tell delightful stories.
For what has made the sage or poet write
But the fair paradise of Nature's light? . . .

ENDYMION.

1817—1818.

JOHN KEATS.

I.

THE INFLUENCE OF BEAUTY.

(OPENING LINES, BOOK I.)

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old, and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read:
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

II.—THE SACRIFICE; AND THE HYMN TO PAN.

(FROM BOOK I.)

Soon the assembly, in a circle rang'd,
Stood silent round the shrine: each look was chang'd
To sudden veneration: women meek
Beckon'd their sons to silence; while each cheek
Of virgin bloom pal'd gently for slight fear.
Endymion too, without a forest peer,
Stood, wan, and pale, and with an awed face,
Among his brothers of the mountain chace.
In midst of all, the venerable priest
Ey'd them with joy from greatest to the least,
And, after lifting up his aged hands,
Thus spake he: "Men of Latmos! shepherd bands!
Whose care it is to guard a thousand flocks:
Whether descended from beneath the rocks
That overtop your mountains; whether come
From vallies where the pipe is never dumb;
Or from your swelling downs, where sweet air stirs
Blue hare-bells lightly, and where prickly furze
Buds lavish gold; or ye, whose precious charge
Nibble their fill at ocean's very marge,
Whose mellow reeds are touch'd with sounds forlorn
By the dim echoes of old Triton's horn:
Mothers and wives! who day by day prepare
The scrip, with needments, for the mountain air;
And all ye gentle girls who foster up
Udderless lambs, and in a little cup
Will put choice honey for a favoured youth:
Yea, every one attend! for in good truth
Our vows are wanting to our great god Pan.
Are not our lowing heifers sleeker than
Night-swollen mushrooms? Are not our wide plains
Speckled with countless fleeces? Have not rains

Green'd over April's lap? No howling sad
Sickens our fearful ewes; and we have had
Great bounty from Endymion our lord.
The earth is glad: the merry lark has pour'd
His early song against yon breezy sky,
That spreads so clear o'er our solemnity."

Thus ending, on the shrine he heap'd a spire
Of teeming sweets, enkindling sacred fire;
Anon he stain'd the thick and spongy sod
With wine, in honour of the shepherd-god.
Now while the earth was drinking it, and while
Bay leaves were crackling in the fragrant pile,
And gummy frankincense was sparkling bright
'Neath smothering parsley, and a hazy light
Spread greyly eastward, thus a chorus sang:

(HYMN TO PAN.)

I.

"O Thou, whose mighty palace roof doth hang
From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth
Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death
Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness;
Who lov'st to see the hamadryads dress
Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels darken;
And through whole solemn hours dost sit, and hearken
The dreary melody of bedded reeds—
In desolate places, where dank moisture breeds
The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth;
Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth
Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx—do thou now,
By thy love's milky brow!
By all the trembling mazes that she ran,
Hear us, great Pan!

II.

"O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet, turtles
Passion their voices cooingly 'mong myrtles,
What time thou wanderest at eventide
Through sunny meadows, that outskirt the side
Of thine enmossed realms: O thou, to whom
Broad leaved fig trees even now foredoom
Their ripen'd fruitage; yellow girted bees
Their golden honeycombs; our village leas
Their fairest blossom'd beans and poppied corn;
The chuckling linnet its five young unborn,
To sing for thee; low creeping strawberries
Their summer coolness; pent up butterflies
Their freckled wings; yea, the fresh budding year
All its completions—be quickly near,
By every wind that nods the mountain pine,
O forester divine!

III.

"Thou, to whom every faun and satyr flies
For willing service; whether to surprise
The squatted hare while in half sleeping fit;
Or upward ragged precipices flit
To save poor lambkins from the eagle's maw;
Or by mysterious enticement draw
Bewildered shepherds to their path again;
Or to tread breathless round the frothy main,
And gather up all fancifullest shells
For thee to tumble into Naiads' cells,
And, being hidden, laugh at their out-peeping;
Or to delight thee with fantastic leaping,
The while they pelt each other on the crown
With silvery oak apples, and fir cones brown—
By all the echoes that about thee ring,
Hear us, O satyr king!

IV.

"O Hearkener to the loud clapping shears,
While ever and anon to his shorn peers
A ram goes bleating: Winder of the horn,
When snouted wild-boars routing tender corn
Anger our huntsman: Breather round our farms,
To keep off mildews, and all weather harms:
Strange ministrant of undescribed sounds,
That come a swooning over hollow grounds,
And wither drearily on barren moors:
Dread opener of the mysterious doors
Leading to universal knowledge—see,
Great son of Dryope,
The many that are come to pay their vows
With leaves about their brows!

V.

"Be still the unimaginable lodge
For solitary thinkings; such as dodge
Conception to the very bourne of heaven,
Then leave the naked brain: be still the leaven,
That spreading in this dull and clodded earth
Gives it a touch ethereal—a new birth:
Be still a symbol of immensity;
A firmament reflected in a sea;
An element filling the space between;
An unknown—but no more: we humbly screen
With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly bending,
And giving out a shout most heaven rending,
Conjure thee to receive our humble Pæan,
Upon thy Mount Lycean!"

Even while they brought the burden to a close,
A shout from the whole multitude arose,

That lingered in the air like dying rolls
Of abrupt thunder, when Ionian shoals
Of dolphins bob their noses through the brine.

III.

THE INDIAN MAID'S LAMENT.

(FROM BOOK IV.)

"Ah, woe is me! that I should fondly part
From my dear native land! Ah, foolish maid!
Glad was the hour, when, with thee, myriads bade
Adieu to Ganges and their pleasant fields!
To one so friendless the clear freshet yields
A bitter coolness; the ripe grape is sour:
Yet I would have, great gods! but one short hour
Of native air—let me but die at home."

Endymion to heaven's airy dome
Was offering up a hecatomb of vows,
When these words reach'd him. Whereupon he bows
His head through thorny-green entanglement
Of underwood, and to the sound is bent,
Anxious as hind towards her hidden fawn.

"Is no one near to help me? No fair dawn
Of life from charitable voice? No sweet saying
To set my dull and sadden'd spirit playing?
No hand to toy with mine? No lips so sweet
That I may worship them? No eyelids meet
To twinkle on my bosom? No one dies
Before me, till from these enslaving eyes
Redemption sparkles!—I am sad and lost."

Thou, Carian lord, hadst better have been tost
Into a whirlpool. Vanish into air,

Warm mountaineer! for canst thou only bear
A woman's sigh alone and in distress?
See not her charms! Is Phœbe passionless?
Phœbe is fairer far—O gaze no more:—
Yet if thou wilt behold all beauty's store,
Behold her panting in the forest grass!
Do not those curls of glossy jet surpass
For tenderness the arms so idly lain
Amongst them? Feelest not a kindred pain,
To see such lovely eyes in swimming search
After some warm delight, that seems to perch
Dovelike in the dim cell lying beyond
Their upper lids?—Hist!

"O for Hermes' wand,
To touch this flower into human shape!
That woodland Hyacinthus could escape
From his green prison, and here kneeling down
Call me his queen, his second life's fair crown!
Ah me, how I could love!—My soul doth melt
For the unhappy youth—Love! I have felt
So faint a kindness, such a meek surrender
To what my own full thoughts had made too tender,
That but for tears my life had fled away!—
Ye deaf and senseless minutes of the day,
And thou, old forest, hold ye this for true,
There is no lightning, no authentic dew
But in the eye of love: there's not a sound,
Melodious howsoever, can confound
The heavens and earth in one to such a death
As doth the voice of love: there's not a breath
Will mingle kindly with the meadow air,
Till it has panted round, and stolen a share
Of passion from the heart!"—

Upon a bough
He leant, wretched. He surely cannot now
Thirst for another love: O impious,
That he can even dream upon it thus!—
Thought he, "Why am I not as are the dead,
Since to a woe like this I have been led
Through the dark earth, and through the wondrous sea?
Goddess! I love thee not the less: from thee
By Juno's smile I turn not—no, no, no—
While the great waters are at ebb and flow.—
I have a triple soul! O fond pretence—
For both, for both my love is so immense,
I feel my heart is cut for them in twain."

And so he groan'd, as one by beauty slain.
The lady's heart beat quick, and he could see
Her gentle bosom heave tumultuously.
He sprang from his green covert: there she lay
Sweet as a musk-rose upon new-made hay;
With all her limbs on tremble, and her eyes
Shut softly up alive. To speak he tries:
"Fair damsel, pity me! forgive that I
Thus violate thy bower's sanctity!
O pardon me, for I am full of grief—
Grief born of thee, young angel! fairest thief!
Who stolen hast away the wings wherewith
I was to top the heavens. Dear maid, sith
Thou art my executioner, and I feel
Loving and hatred, misery and weal,
Will in a few short hours be nothing to me,
And all my story that much passion slew me;
Do smile upon the evening of my days:
And, for my tortur'd brain begins to craze,
Be thou my nurse; and let me understand

How dying I shall kiss that lilly hand.—
Dost weep for me? Then should I be content.
Scowl on, ye fates! until the firmament
Outblackens Erebus, and the full-cavern'd earth
Crumbles into itself. By the cloud girth
Of Jove, those tears have given me a thirst
To meet oblivion."—As her heart would burst
The maiden sobb'd awhile, and then reply'd:
"Why must such desolation betide
As that thou speak'st of? Are not these green nooks
Empty of all misfortune? Do the brooks
Utter a gorgon voice? Does yonder thrush,
Schooling its half-fledg'd little ones to brush
About the dewy forest, whisper tales?—
Speak not of grief, young stranger, or cold snails
Will slime the rose to night. Though if thou wilt,
Methinks 'twould be a guilt—a very guilt—
Not to companion thee, and sigh away
The light—the dusk—the dark—till break of day!
"Dear lady," said Endymion, "'tis past:
I love thee! and my days can never last.
That I may pass in patience still speak:
Let me have music dying, and I seek
No more delight—I bid adieu to all.
Didst thou not after other climates call,
And murmur about Indian streams?"—Then she,
Sitting beneath the midmost forest tree,
For pity sang this roundelay——

"O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
The natural hue of health, from vermeil lips?—
To give maiden blushes
To the white rose bushes?
Or is't thy dewy hand the daisy tips?

"O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye?—
To give the glow-worm light?
Or, on a moonless night,
To tinge, on syren shores, the salt sea-spry?

"O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue?—
To give at evening pale
Unto the nightingale,
That thou mayst listen the cold dews among?

"O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
Heart's lightness from the merriment of May?—
A lover would not tread
A cowslip on the head,
Though he should dance from eve till peep of day—
Nor any drooping flower
Held sacred for thy bower,
Wherever he may sport himself and play.

"To Sorrow,
I bade good-morrow,
And thought to leave her far away behind;
But cheerly, cheerly,
She loves me dearly;
She is so constant to me, and so kind:
I would deceive her
And so leave her,
But ah! she is so constant and so kind.

(THE PROCESSION OF BACCHUS.)

"BENEATH my palm trees, by the river side,
I sat a weeping: in the whole world wide
There was no one to ask me why I wept,—
And so I kept
Brimming the water-lilly cups with tears
Cold as my fears.

"Beneath my palm trees, by the river side,
I sat a weeping: what enamour'd bride,
Cheated by shadowy wooer from the clouds,
But hides and shrouds
Beneath dark palm trees by a river side?

"And as I sat, over the light blue hills
There came a noise of revellers: the rills
Into the wide stream came of purple hue—
'Twas Bacchus and his crew!
The earnest trumpet spake, and silver thrills
From kissing cymbals made a merry din—
'Twas Bacchus and his kin!
Like to a moving vintage down they came,
Crown'd with green leaves, and faces all on flame;
All madly dancing through the pleasant valley,
To scare thee, Melancholy!
O then, O then, thou wast a simple name!
And I forgot thee, as the berried holly
By shepherds is forgotten, when, in June,
Tall chesnuts keep away the sun and moon:—
I rush'd into the folly!

"Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,
Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood,
With sidelong laughing;
And little rills of crimson wine imbru'd

His plump white arms, and shoulders, enough white
For Venus' pearly bite;
And near him rode Silenus on his ass,
Pelted with flowers as he on did pass
Tipsily quaffing.

"Whence came ye, merry Damsels! whence came ye!
So many, and so many, and such glee?
Why have ye left your bowers desolate,
Your lutes, and gentler fate?—
'We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the wing,
A conquering!
Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill betide,
We dance before him thorough kingdoms wide:—
Come hither, lady fair, and joined be
To our wild minstrelsy!'

"Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs! whence came ye!
So many, and so many, and such glee?
Why have ye left your forest haunts, why left
Your nuts in oak-tree cleft?—
'For wine, for wine we left our kernel tree;
For wine we left our heath, and yellow brooms,
And cold mushrooms;
For wine we follow Bacchus through the earth;
Great God of breathless cups and chirping mirth!—
Come hither, lady fair, and joined be
To our mad minstrelsy!'

"Over wide streams and mountains great we went,
And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent,
Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,
With Asian elephants:

Onward these myriads—with song and dance,
With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians' prance,
Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,
Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,
Plump infant laughers mimicking the coil
Of seamen, and stout galley-rowers' toil:
With toying oars and silken sails they glide,
Nor care for wind and tide.

"Mounted on panthers' furs and lions' manes,
From rear to van they scour about the plains;
A three days' journey in a moment done:
And always, at the rising of the sun,
About the wilds they hunt with spear and horn,
On spleenful unicorn.

"I saw Osirian Egypt kneel adown
Before the vine-wreath crown!
I saw parch'd Abyssinia rouse and sing
To the silver cymbals' ring!
I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce
Old Tartary the fierce!
The kings of Ind their jewel-sceptres vail,
And from their treasures scatter pearled hail;
Great Brahma from his mystic heaven groans,
And all his priesthood moans;
Before young Bacchus' eye-wink turning pale.—
Into these regions came I following him,
Sickhearted, weary—so I took a whim
To stray away into these forests drear
Alone, without a peer:
And I have told thee all thou mayest hear.

"Young stranger!
I've been a ranger
In search of pleasure throughout every clime:
Alas, 'tis not for me!
Bewitch'd I sure must be,
To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

"Come then, Sorrow!
Sweetest Sorrow!
Like an own babe I nurse thee on my breast:
I thought to leave thee
And deceive thee,
But now of all the world I love thee best.

"There is not one,
No, no, not one
But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid;
Thou art her mother,
And her brother,
Her playmate, and her wooer in the shade."

O what a sigh she gave in finishing,
And look, quite dead to every worldly thing!
Endymion could not speak, but gaz'd on her;
And listened to the wind that now did stir
About the crisped oaks full drearily,
Yet with as sweet a softness as might be
Remember'd from its velvet summer song.
At last he said: "Poor lady, how thus long
Have I been able to endure that voice?
Fair Melody! kind Syren! I've no choice;
I must be thy sad servant evermore:
I cannot choose but kneel here and adore.

FRAGMENTS.

JOHN KEATS.

I.—ODE TO MAIA.

MAY DAY, 1818.

MOTHER of Hermes! and still youthful Maia
May I sing to thee
As thou wast hymned on the shores of Baiæ?
Or may I woo thee
In earlier Sicilian? or thy smiles
Seek as they once were sought, in Grecian isles,
By bards who died content on pleasant sward,
Leaving great verse unto a little clan?
O, give me their old vigour, and unheard
Save of the quiet Primrose, and the span
Of heaven and few ears,
Rounded by thee, my song should die away
Content as theirs,
Rich in the simple worship of a day.

II.—THE EVE OF SAINT MARK.

1818—1819.

UPON a Sabbath-day it fell;
Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell,
That call'd the folk to evening prayer;
The city streets were clean and fair
From wholesome drench of April rains;
And, on the western window panes,
The chilly sunset faintly told
Of unmatur'd green vallies cold,
Of the green thorny bloomless hedge,
Of rivers new with spring-tide sedge,
Of primroses by shelter'd rills,
And daisies on the aguish hills.
Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell:
The silent streets were crowded well
With staid and pious companies,
Warm from their fire-side orat'ries;

And moving, with demurest air,
To even-song, and vesper prayer.
Each arched porch, and entry low,
Was fill'd with patient folk and slow,
With whispers hush, and shuffling feet,
While play'd the organ loud and sweet.

The bells had ceas'd, the prayers begun,
And Bertha had not yet half done
A curious volume, patch'd and torn,
That all day long, from earliest morn,
Had taken captive her two eyes,
Among its golden broideries;
Perplex'd her with a thousand things,—
The stars of Heaven, and angels' wings,
Martyrs in a fiery blaze,
Azure saints and silver rays,
Moses' breastplate, and the seven
Candlesticks John saw in Heaven,
The winged Lion of Saint Mark,
And the Covenantal Ark,
With its many mysteries,
Cherubim and golden mice.

Bertha was a maiden fair,
Dwelling in th' old Minster-square;
From her fire-side she could see,
Sidelong, its rich antiquity,
Far as the Bishop's garden-wall;
Where sycamores and elm-trees tall,
Full-leav'd, the forest had outstript,
By no sharp north-wind ever nipt,
So shelter'd by the mighty pile.
Bertha arose, and read awhile,
With forehead 'gainst the window-pane.
Again she try'd, and then again,

Until the dusk eve left her dark
Upon the legend of St. Mark.
From plaited lawn-frill, fine and thin,
She lifted up her soft warm chin,
With aching neck and swimming eyes,
And daz'd with saintly imageries.

All was gloom, and silent all,
Save now and then the still foot-fall
Of one returning homewards late,
Past the echoing minster-gate.
The clamorous daws, that all the day
Above tree-tops and towers play,
Pair by pair had gone to rest,
Each in its ancient belfry-nest,
Where asleep they fall betimes,
To music and the drowsy chimes.

All was silent, all was gloom,
Abroad and in the homely room:
Down she sat, poor cheated soul!
And struck a lamp from the dismal coal;
Lean'd forward, with bright drooping hair
And slant book, full against the glare.
Her shadow, in uneasy guise,
Hover'd about, a giant size,
On ceiling-beam and old oak chair,
The parrot's cage, and panel square;
And the warm angled winter-screen,
On which were many monsters seen,
Call'd doves of Siam, Lima mice,
And legless birds of Paradise,
Macaw, and tender Avadavat,
And silken-furr'd Angora cat.
Untir'd she read, her shadow still
Glower'd about, as it would fill

The room with wildest forms and shades,
As though some ghostly queen of spades
Had come to mock behind her back,
And dance, and ruffle her garments black.
Untir'd she read the legend page,
Of holy Mark, from youth to age,
On land, on sea, in pagan chains,
Rejoicing for his many pains.
Sometimes the learned eremite,
With golden star, or dagger bright,
Referr'd to pious poesies
Written in smallest crow-quill size
Beneath the text; and thus the rhyme
Was parcell'd out from time to time:
——"Als writith he of swevenis,
Men han beforne they wake in bliss,
Whanne that hir friendes thinke him bound
In crimped shroude farre under grounde;
And how a litling child mote be
A saint er its nativitie,
Gif that the modre (God her blesse!)
Kepen in solitarinesse,
And kissen devoute the holy croce.
Of Goddes love, and Sathan's force,—
He writith; and thinges many mo
Of swiche thinges I may not show
Bot I must tellen verilie
Somdel of Saintè Cicilie,
And chieflie what he auctorethe
Of Saintè Markis life and dethe:"
At length her constant eyelids come
Upon the fervent martyrdom;
Then lastly to his holy shrine,
Exalt amid the tapers' shine
At Venice,—

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES.

1819.

JOHN KEATS.

I.

ST. AGNES' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

II.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze,
Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails:
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

III.

Northward he turneth through a little door,
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue
Flatter'd to tears this aged man and poor;
But no—already had his death-bell rung;
The joys of all his life were said and sung:
His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve:
Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

IV.

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft;
And so it chanc'd, for many a door was wide,
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:
The carved angels, ever eager-ey'd,
Star'd, where upon their heads the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on
their breasts.

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting faerily
The brain, new stuff'd, in youth, with triumphs gay
Of old romance. These let us wish away,
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,
On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly care,
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

VI.

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,
Young virgins might have visions of delight,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honey'd middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright;
As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lilly white;
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

VII.

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
The music, yearning like a God in pain,
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
Pass by—she heeded not at all: in vain
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
And back retir'd; not cool'd by high disdain,
But she saw not: her heart was otherwhere:
She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

VIII.

She danc'd along with vague, regardless eyes,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:
The hallow'd hour was near at hand: she sighs
Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd resort
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
Hoodwink'd with faery fancy; all amort,
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

IX.

So, purposing each moment to retire,
She linger'd still. Meantime, across the moors,
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,
Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he, and implores
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
That he might gaze and worship all unseen;
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth such things have been.

X.

He ventures in: let no buzz'd whisper tell:
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous citadel:
For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage: not one breast affords
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

XI.

Ah! happy chance! the aged creature came,
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond
The sound of merriment and chorus bland:
He startled her; but soon she knew his face,
And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied hand,
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from this place;
"They are all here to-night, the whole blood-thirsty race!

XII.

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish Hildebrand;
He had a fever late, and in the fit
He cursed thee and thine, both house and land:
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit
More tame for his gray hairs—Alas me! flit!
Flit like a ghost away."—"Ah, Gossip dear,
We're safe enough; here in this arm-chair sit,
And tell me how"—"Good Saints! not here, not here;
Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy bier."

XIII.

He follow'd through a lowly arched way,
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume,
And as she mutter'd "Well-a—well-a-day!"
He found him in a little moonlight room,
Pale, lattic'd, chill, and silent as a tomb.
"Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,
"O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving piously."

XIV.

"St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve—
Yet men will murder upon holy days:
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,
To venture so: it fills me with amaze
To see thee, Porphyro!—St. Agnes' Eve!
God's help! my lady fair the conjuror plays
This very night: good angels her deceive!
But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle time to grieve."

XV.

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone
Who keepeth clos'd a wond'rous riddle-book,
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told
His lady's purpose; and he scarce could brook
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

XVI.

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,
Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart
Made purple riot: then doth he propose
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start:
"A cruel man and impious thou art:
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and dream
Alone with her good angels, far apart
From wicked men like thee. Go, go! I deem
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst seem."

XVII.

"I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"
Quoth Porphyro: "O may I ne'er find grace
When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
Or look with ruffian passion in her face:
Good Angela, believe me by these tears;
Or I will, even in a moment's space,
Awake, with horrid shout, my foeman's ears,
And beard them, though they be more fang'd than wolves and bears."

XVIII.

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,
Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll;
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,
Were never miss'd." Thus plaining, doth she bring
A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;
So woful, and of such deep sorrowing,
That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

XIX.

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
Him in a closet, of such privacy
That he might see her beauty unespy'd,
And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,
While legion'd faeries pac'd the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-ey'd.
Never on such a night have lovers met,
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

XX.

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the Dame:
"All cates and dainties shall be stored there
Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour frame
Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.
Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel in prayer
The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady wed,
Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

XXI.

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.
The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd;
The dame return'd, and whisper'd in his ear
To follow her; with aged eyes aghast
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd, and chaste;
Where Porphyro took covert, pleas'd amain.
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

XXII.

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,
Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware:
With silver taper's light, and pious care,
She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'd and fled.

XXIII.

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in palled moonshine, died:
She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

XXIV.

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and king

XXV.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

XXVI.

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

XXVII.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain;
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

XXVIII.

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gaz'd upon her empty dress,
And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
And breath'd himself: then from the closet crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,
And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where, lo!—how fast she sle

XXIX.

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet:—
O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,
Affray his ears, though but in dying tone:—
The hall door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

XXX.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanched linen, smooth, and lavender'd,
While he from forth the closet brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
From Fez; and spiced dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon.

XXXI.

These delicates he heap'd with glowing hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retired quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light.—
"And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache."

XXXII.

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains:—'twas a midnight charm
Impossible to melt as iced stream:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam;
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:
It seem'd he never, never could redeem
From such a stedfast spell his lady's eyes;
So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofed phantasies.

XXXIII.

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—
Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tenderest be,
He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence call'd, "La belle dame sans mercy:"
Close to her ear touching the melody;—
Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft moan:
He ceas'd—she panted quick—and suddenly
Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone.

XXXIV.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep :
There was a painful change, that nigh expell'd
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many a sigh ;
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep ;
Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous eye,
Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so dreamingly

XXXV.

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow ;
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear :
How chang'd thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!
Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go."

XXXVI.

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star
Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose ;
Into her dream he melted, as the rose
Blendeth its odour with the violet,—
Solution sweet : meantime the frost-wind blows
Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet
Against the window-panes ; St. Agnes' moon hath set.

XXXVII.

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:
"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"
'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:
"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—
Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?
I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
Though thou forsakest a deceived thing;—
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

XXXVIII.

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeil dy'd?
Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
After so many hours of toil and quest,
A famish'd pilgrim,—sav'd by miracle.
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest
Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel."

XXXIX.

"Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:
Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—
The bloated wassaillers will never heed:—
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—
Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:
Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

XL.

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.—
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door;
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,
Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

XLI.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;
Like phantoms, to the iron porch, they glide;
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flaggon by his side:
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;—
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

XLII.

And they are gone: aye, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm.
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,
Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform;
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
For aye unsought for slept among his ashes cold.

ODES, ETC.

JOHN KEATS.

I.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

1819.

I.

MY heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

II.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun burnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

III.

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-ey'd despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

IV.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

V.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

VI.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

VII.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

VIII.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

II.

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN.

1819.

I.

THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

II.

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

III.

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;

More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

IV.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

V.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

III.

ODE TO PSYCHE.

1819.

O GODDESS! hear these tuneless numbers, wrung
By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,
And pardon that thy secrets should be sung
Even into thine own soft-conched ear:
Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see
The winged Psyche with awaken'd eyes?
I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,
And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,
Saw two fair creatures, couched side by side
In deepest grass, beneath the whisp'ring roof
Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where there ran
A brooklet, scarce espy'd:

'Mid hush'd, cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-ey'd,
Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,
They lay calm-breathing, on the bedded grass;
Their arms embraced, and their pinions too;
Their lips touch'd not, but had not bade adieu,
As if disjoined by soft-handed slumber,
And ready still past kisses to outnumber
At tender eye-dawn of aurorean love:
The winged boy I knew;
But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove?
His Psyche true!

O latest born and loveliest vision far
Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy!
Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-region'd star,
Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the sky;

Fairer than these, though temple thou hast none,
Nor altar heap'd with flowers;
Nor virgin-choir to make delicious moan
Upon the midnight hours;
No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet
From chain-swung censer teeming;
No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat
Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

O brightest! though too late for antique vows,
Too, too late for the fond believing lyre,
When holy were the haunted forest boughs,
Holy the air, the water, and the fire;
Yet even in these days so far retir'd
From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,
Fluttering among the faint Olympians,
I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspir'd.
So let me be thy choir, and make a moan
Upon the midnight hours;
Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet
From swinged censer teeming;
Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat
Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
In some untrodden region of my mind,
Where branched thoughts, new grown with pleasant pain,
Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind:
Far, far around shall those dark-cluster'd trees
Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep by steep;
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to sleep;
And in the midst of this wide quietness
A rosy sanctuary will I dress

With the wreath'd trellis of a working brain,
With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,
With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,
Who breeding flowers, will never breed the same:
And there shall be for thee all soft delight
That shadowy thought can win,
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,
To let the warm Love in!

IV.

TO AUTUMN.

1819.

I.

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

II.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers

And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
  Steady thy laden head across a brook;
  Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
    Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

III.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
  Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
  And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
  Among the river sallows, borne aloft
    Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
  Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
  The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
    And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

V.

ODE ON MELANCHOLY.

1819.

I.

NO, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist
  Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine;
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd
  By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine;
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,
  Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
    Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;
  For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
    And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

II.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an April shroud;
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globed peonies;
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

III.

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of Delight
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

VI.

BARDS OF PASSION AND OF MIRTH.

BARDS of Psasion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Have ye souls in heaven too,
Double-liv'd in regions new?
Yes, and those of heaven commune
With the spheres of sun and moon;
With the noise of fountains wond'rous,

And the parle of voices thund'rous;
With the whisper of heaven's trees
And one another, in soft ease
Seated on Elysian lawns
Brows'd by none but Dian's fawns;
Underneath large blue-bells tented,
Where the daisies are rose-scented,
And the rose herself has got
Perfume which on earth is not;
Where the nightingale doth sing
Not a senseless, tranced thing,
But divine melodious truth;
Philosophic numbers smooth;
Tales and golden histories
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then
On the earth ye live again;
And the souls ye left behind you
Teach us, here, the way to find you,
Where your other souls are joying,
Never slumber'd, never cloying.
Here, your earth-born souls still speak
To mortals, of their little week;
Of their sorrows and delights;
Of their passions and their spites;
Of their glory and their shame;
What doth strengthen and what maim.
Thus ye teach us, every day,
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Ye have souls in heaven too,
Double-liv'd in regions new!

VII.

LINES ON THE MERMAID TAVERN.

SOULS of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?
Have ye tippled drink more fine
Than mine host's Canary wine?
Or are fruits of Paradise
Sweeter than those dainty pies
Of venison? O generous food!
Drest as though bold Robin Hood
Would, with his maid Marian,
Sup and bowse from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day
Mine host's sign-board flew away,
Nobody knew whither, till
An astrologer's old quill
To a sheepskin gave the story,
Said he saw you in your glory,
Underneath a new old-sign
Sipping beverage divine,
And pledging with contented smack
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

HYPERION.

1818—1820

JOHN KEATS.

I.

SATURN AND THEA.

(FROM BOOK I.)

DEEP in the shady sadness of a vale
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,
Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,
Still as the silence round about his lair;
Forest on forest hung about his head
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,
Not so much life as on a summer's day
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.
A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more
By reason of his fallen divinity
Spreading a shade: the Naiad 'mid her reeds
Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went,
No further than to where his feet had stray'd,
And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,
Unsceptred; and his realmless eyes were closed;
While his bow'd head seem'd list'ning to the Earth,
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

It seem'd no force could wake him from his place ;
But there came one, who with a kindred hand
Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bending low
With reverence, though to one who knew it not.
She was a Goddess of the infant world ;
By her in stature the tall Amazon
Had stood a pigmy's height : she would have ta'en
Achilles by the hair and bent his neck ;
Or with a finger stay'd Ixion's wheel.
Her face was large as that of Memphian sphinx,
Pedestal'd haply in a palace court,
When sages look'd to Egypt for their lore.
But oh ! how unlike marble was that face :
How beautiful, if sorrow had not made
Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.
There was a listening fear in her regard,
As if calamity had but begun ;
As if the vanward clouds of evil days
Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear
Was with its stored thunder labouring up.
One hand she press'd upon that aching spot
Where beats the human heart, as if just there
Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain :
The other upon Saturn's bended neck
She laid, and to the level of his ear
Leaning with parted lips, some words she spake
In solemn tenour and deep organ tone :
Some mourning words, which in our feeble tongue
Would come in these like accents ; O how frail
To that large utterance of the early Gods !
" Saturn, look up !—though wherefore, poor old King ?
I have no comfort for thee, no not one :"
I cannot say, ' O wherefore sleepest thou ? '
For heaven is parted from thee, and the earth

Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a God;
And ocean too, with all its solemn noise,
Has from thy sceptre pass'd; and all the air
Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.
Thy thunder, conscious of the new command,
Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house;
And thy sharp lightning in unpractis'd hands
Scorches and burns our once serene domain.
O aching time! O moments big as years!
All as ye pass swell out the monstrous truth,
And press it so upon our weary griefs
That unbelief has not a space to breathe.
Saturn, sleep on:—O thoughtless, why did I
Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude?
Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes?
Saturn, sleep on! while at thy feet I weep."

As when, upon a tranced summer-night,
Those green-rob'd senators of mighty woods,
Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir
Save from one gradual solitary gust
Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,
As if the ebbing air had but one wave;
So came these words and went; the while in tears
She touch'd her fair large forehead to the ground,
Just where her falling hair might be outspread
A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet.

II.

THE FALLEN TITANS.

(FROM BOOK II.)

It was a den where no insulting light
Could glimmer on their tears; where their own groans
They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar
Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse,
Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where.
Crag jutting forth to crag, and rocks that seem'd
Ever as if just rising from a sleep,
Forehead to forehead held their monstrous horns;
And thus in thousand hugest phantasies
Made a fit roofing to this nest of woe.
Instead of thrones, hard flint they sat upon,
Couches of rugged stone, and slaty ridge
Stubborn'd with iron. All were not assembled:
Some chain'd in torture, and some wandering.
Cœus, and Gyges, and Briareüs,
Typhon, and Dolor, and Porphyrion,
With many more, the brawniest in assault,
Were pent in regions of laborious breath;
Dungeon'd in opaque element, to keep
Their clenched teeth still clench'd, and all their limbs
Lock'd up like veins of metal, crampt and screw'd;
Without a motion, save of their big hearts
Heaving in pain, and horribly convuls'd
With sanguine feverous boiling gurge of pulse.
Mnemosyne was straying in the world;
Far from her moon had Phœbe wandered;
And many else were free to roam abroad,
But for the main, here found they covert drear.
Scarce images of life, one here, one there,

Lay vast and edgeways; like a dismal cirque
Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,
When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,
In dull November, and their chancel vault,
The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.
Each one kept shroud, nor to his neighbour gave
Or word, or look, or action of despair.
Creüs was one; his ponderous iron mace
Lay by him, and a shatter'd rib of rock
Told of his rage, ere he thus sank and pined.
Iäpetus another; in his grasp,
A serpent's plashy neck; its barbed tongue
Squeez'd from the gorge, and all its uncurl'd length
Dead; and because the creature could not spit
Its poison in the eyes of conquering Jove.
Next Cottus: prone he lay, chin uppermost,
As though in pain; for still upon the flint
He ground severe his skull, with open mouth
And eyes at horrid working. Nearest him
Asia, born of most enormous Caf,
Who cost her mother Tellus keener pangs,
Though feminine, than any of her sons:
More thought than woe was in her dusky face,
For she was prophesying of her glory;
And in her wide imagination stood
Palm-shaded temples, and high rival fanes,
By Oxus or in Ganges' sacred isles.
Even as Hope upon her anchor leans,
So leant she, not so fair, upon a tusk
Shed from the broadest of her elephants.
Above her, on a crag's uneasy shelve,
Upon his elbow rais'd, all prostrate else,
Shadow'd Enceladus; once tame and mild
As grazing ox unworried in the meads;

Now tiger-passion'd, lion-thoughted, wroth,
He meditated, plotted, and even now
Was hurling mountains in that second war,
Not long delay'd, that scar'd the younger Gods
To hide themselves in forms of beast and bird.
Not far hence Atlas; and beside him prone
Phorcus, the sire of Gorgons. Neighbour'd close
Oceanus, and Tethys, in whose lap
Sobb'd Clymene among her tangled hair.
In midst of all lay Themis, at the feet
Of Ops the queen all clouded round from sight;
No shape distinguishable, more than when
Thick night confounds the pine-tops with the clouds:
And many else whose names may not be told.

III.

THE COMING OF HYPERION.

(FROM BOOK II.)

All eyes were on Enceladus's face,
And they beheld, while still Hyperion's name
Flew from his lips up to the vaulted rocks,
A pallid gleam across his features stern:
Not savage, for he saw full many a God
Wroth as himself. He look'd upon them all,
And in each face he saw a gleam of light,
But splendider in Saturn's, whose hoar locks
Shone like the bubbling foam about a keel
When the prow sweeps into a midnight cove.
In pale and silver silence they remain'd,
Till suddenly a splendour, like the morn,
Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps,
All the sad spaces of oblivion,

And every gulf, and every chasm old,
And every height, and every sullen depth,
Voiceless or hoarse with loud tormented streams:
And all the everlasting cataracts,
And all the headlong torrents far and near,
Mantled before in darkness and huge shade,
Now saw the light and made it terrible.
It was Hyperion:—a granite peak
His bright feet touch'd, and there he stay'd to view
The misery his brilliance had betray'd
To the most hateful seeing of itself.
Golden his hair of short Numidian curl,
Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade
In midst of his own brightness, like the bulk
Of Memnon's image at the set of sun
To one who travels from the dusking East:
Sighs, too, as mournful as that Memnon's harp
He utter'd, while his hands contemplative
He press'd together, and in silence stood.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI.

1819.

JOHN KEATS.

I.

AH, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
Alone and palely loitering;
The sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

II.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

III.

I see a lilly on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

IV.

I met a lady in the meads
Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

V.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery's song.

VI.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

VII.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew;
And sure in language strange she said,
I love thee true.

VIII.

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gaz'd and sighed deep,
And there I shut her wild sad eyes—
So kiss'd to sleep.

IX.

And there we slumber'd on the moss,
And there I dream'd, ah woe betide,
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill side.

X.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cry'd—"La belle Dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

XI.

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloom
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill side.

XII.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

SONNETS.

1815—1820

JOHN KEATS.

I.—WOMAN. 1.

WOMAN! when I behold thee flippant, vain,
Inconstant, childish, proud, and full of fancies;
Without that modest softening that enhances
The downcast eye, repentant of the pain
That its mild light creates to heal again:
E'en then, elate, my spirit leaps, and prances,
E'en then my soul with exultation dances
For that to love, so long, I've dormant lain:
But when I see thee meek, and kind, and tender,
Heavens! how desperately do I adore
Thy winning graces;—to be thy defender
I hotly burn—to be a Calidore—
A very Red Cross Knight—a stout Leander—
Might I be lov'd by thee like these of yore.

II.—WOMAN. 2.

LIGHT feet, dark violet eyes, and parted hair;
Soft dimpled hands, white neck, and creamy breast,
Are things on which the dazzled senses rest
Till the fond, fixed eyes, forget they stare.
From such fine pictures, heavens! I cannot dare
To turn my admiration, though unpossess'd
They be of what is worthy,—though not drest
In lovely modesty, and virtues rare.
Yet these I leave as thoughtless as a lark;
These lures I straight forget,—e'en ere I dine,
Or thrice my palate moisten: but when I mark
Such charms with mild intelligences shine,
My ear is open like a greedy shark,
To catch the tunings of a voice divine.

III.—WOMAN 3.

AH! who can e'er forget so fair a being?
Who can forget her half retiring sweets?
God! she is like a milk-white lamb that bleats
For man's protection. Surely the All-seeing,
Who joys to see us with his gifts agreeing,
Will never give him pinions, who intreats
Such innocence to ruin,—who vilely cheats
A dove-like bosom. In truth there is no freeing
One's thoughts from such a beauty; when I hear
A lay that once I saw her hand awake,
Her form seems floating palpable, and near;
Had I e'er seen her from an arbour take
A dewy flower, oft would that hand appear,
And o'er my eyes the trembling moisture shake.

IV.—O SOLITUDE!

O SOLITUDE! if I must with thee dwell,
Let it not be among the jumbled heap
Of murky buildings; climb with me the steep,—
Nature's observatory—whence the dell,
Its flowery slopes, its river's crystal swell,
May seem a span; let me thy vigils keep
'Mongst boughs pavillion'd, where the deer's swift leap
Startles the wild bee from the fox-glove bell.
But though I'll gladly trace these scenes with thee,
Yet the sweet converse of an innocent mind,
Whose words are images of thoughts refin'd,
Is my soul's pleasure; and it sure must be
Almost the highest bliss of human-kind,
When to thy haunts two kindred spirits flee.

V.—KEEN, FITFUL GUSTS.

KEEN, fitful gusts are whisp'ring here and there
Among the bushes half leafless, and dry;
The stars look very cold about the sky,
And I have many miles on foot to fare.
Yet feel I little of the cool bleak air,
Or of the dead leaves rustling drearily,
Or of those silver lamps that burn on high,
Or of the distance from home's pleasant lair:
For I am brimfull of the friendliness
That in a little cottage I have found;
Of fair-hair'd Milton's eloquent distress,
And all his love for gentle Lycid drown'd;
Of lovely Laura in her light green dress,
And faithful Petrarch gloriously crown'd.

VI.—ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

MUCH have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

VII.—ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET.

DECEMBER 30, 1816.

THE poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead;
That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights; for when tired out with fun
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

VIII.—HAPPY IS ENGLAND!

HAPPY is England! I could be content
To see no other verdure than its own;
To feel no other breezes than are blown
Through its tall woods with high romances blent:
Yet do I sometimes feel a languishment
For skies Italian, and an inward groan
To sit upon an Alp as on a throne,
And half forget what world or worldling meant.
Happy is England, sweet her artless daughters;
Enough their simple loveliness for me,
Enough their whitest arms in silence clinging:
Yet do I often warmly burn to see
Beauties of deeper glance, and hear their singing,
And float with them about the summer waters.

IX.—AFTER DARK VAPOURS.

AFTER dark vapours have oppress'd our plains
For a long dreary season, comes a day
Born of the gentle South, and clears away
From the sick heavens all unseemly stains.
The anxious month, relieved of its pains,
Takes as a long-lost right the feel of May;
The eyelids with the passing coolness play
Like rose leaves with the drip of Summer rains.
The calmest thoughts come round us; as of leaves
Budding—fruit ripening in stillness—Autumn suns
Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves—
Sweet Sappho's cheek—a smiling infant's breath—
The gradual sand that through an hour-glass runs—
A woodland rivulet—a Poet's death.

X.—ON A PICTURE OF LEANDER.

COME hither all sweet maidens soberly,
Down-looking aye, and with a chasten'd light,
Hid in the fringes of your eyelids white,
And meekly let your fair hands joined be,
As if so gentle that ye could not see,
Untouch'd, a victim of your beauty bright,
Sinking away to his young spirit's night,—
Sinking bewilder'd 'mid the dreary sea:
'Tis young Leander toiling to his death;
Nigh swooning, he doth purse his weary lips
For Hero's cheek, and smiles against her smile.
O horrid dream! see how his body dips
Dead-heavy; arms and shoulders gleam awhile:
He's gone; up bubbles all his amorous breath

XI.—TO AILSA ROCK.

HEARKEN, thou craggy ocean pyramid!
Give answer from thy voice, the sea-fowls' screams
When were thy shoulders mantled in huge streams?
When, from the sun, was thy broad forehead hid?
How long is 't since the mighty power bid
Thee heave to airy sleep from fathom dreams?
Sleep in the lap of thunder or sunbeams,
Or when grey clouds are thy cold coverlid.
Thou answer'st not; for thou art dead asleep;
Thy life is but two dead eternities—
The last in air, the former in the deep;
First with the whales, last with the eagle-skies—
Drown'd wast thou till an earthquake made thee steep,
Another cannot wake thy giant size.

XII.—WHY DID I LAUGH TO-NIGHT?

WHY did I laugh to-night? No voice will tell:
No God, no Demon of severe response,
Deigns to reply from Heaven or from Hell.
Then to my human heart I turn at once.
Heart! Thou and I are here sad and alone
I say, why did I laugh? O mortal pain!
O Darkness! Darkness! ever must I moan
To question Heaven and Hell and Heart in vain.
Why did I laugh? I know this Being's lease,
My fancy to its utmost blisses spreads;
Yet would I on this very midnight cease,
And the world's gaudy ensigns see in shreds;
Verse, Fame, and Beauty are intense indeed,
But Death intenser—Death is Life's high meed.

XIII.—A DREAM,

AFTER READING DANTE'S EPISODE OF PAULO AND FRANCESCA.

AS Hermes once took to his feathers light,
When lulled Argus, baffled, swoon'd and slept,
So on a Delphic reed, my idle spright
So play'd, so charm'd, so conquer'd, so bereft
The dragon-world of all its hundred eyes;
And, seeing it asleep, so fled away—
Not to pure Ida with its snow-cold skies,
Nor unto Tempe where Jove griev'd a day;
But to that second circle of sad hell,
Where 'mid the gust, the whirlwind, and the flaw
Of rain and hail-stones, lovers need not tell
Their sorrows. Pale were the sweet lips I saw,
Pale were the lips I kiss'd, and fair the form
I floated with, about that melancholy storm.

XIV.—KEATS' LAST SONNET.

BRIGHT star, would I were stedfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No—yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

John Clare.

1793—1864.

John Clare, born at Helpstone, near Peterborough, on July 13th, 1793, was, of all true poets, the lowest in social standing. His father was a day-labourer, who, early incapacitated by ill-health, became a pauper in receipt of parish relief. His mother, too, was of feeble constitution, and the humble pair transmitted their low vitality to their son. He was sent to an infant school until he was seven, and then set to watch sheep and geese on the village green. But here he found unexpectedly a sort of education well fitted to evoke his latent powers, and it was given by an old woman—the cowherd of Helpstone, "Granny Bairns,"—in her own fashion. She had spent almost her whole life out of doors, and was regarded as an oracle, being intimately acquainted with all the signs foreboding change of weather. She had a joyous nature, and a frame that never knew illness. She had learned, moreover, every verse or melody that was sung within her hearing, until her mind became a very storehouse of song. The child would sit at her feet for hours, drinking in her rustic lore. But so ardent grew his desire for more knowledge, that he, this diminutive, weakly child, who had got ague from the ill-drained fields where he worked, toiled overtime at the plough; and by the labour of eight weeks generally acquired as much as would

pay for a month's evening school. Water porridge and potatoes were the staple food of the Clares, with a loaf or two from the parish; and the child had to work for his parents with a little flail, especially provided for him, in the barn. They lived in a wretched hut, low and dark, which stood on a dull, gloomy plain, covered with stagnant pools of water, overhung by mists. "Out of these surroundings," says Mr. Martin, his biographer, "sprang a being to whom all life was golden." As a little child, he could never be kept at home. One day a wild yearning possessed him to explore the far horizon where sky and earth met, to find out what was there, and beyond. The little fellow thought about it all night, and set off early, without food, lest he should be prevented going; he trotted on till he sank down from sheer exhaustion, and it was late at night before, helped on his way, and fed by some kindly labourers, he got back home to his anxious parents. Whence came the vision and the music to this child? Ah! whence come they to any child? Why not to all the dwellers in large houses, full of luxury, who have all mental and bodily advantages possible?

It is pathetically recorded of his early struggles that he was wont to pick up scraps of paper here and there, and scribble his rude rhymes upon them by firelight, on winter evenings, lying on the hearth of the dim cot; and later, on similar fragments laid upon the crown of his hat, by the kiln where he burned lime, stuffing these papers into a hole in the cottage wall, from whence his mother would take them to light the fire with.

When he was thirteen, a farmer's boy showed

but would not lend, him a copy of Thomson's "Seasons," and with great difficulty, having raised the sum of eighteen-pence, he trudged, one Sunday morning, eight miles to Stamford, but found, to his mortification, the shop shut; so early on Monday he returned, long before the shop was open, and having bought the coveted volume, climbed the wall of Burghley Park (Lord Exeter's), and, throwing himself on the grass, enjoyed his treasure in peace. This bore fruit in a poem that was afterwards printed: "The Morning Walk." The Muse was beginning to interest herself in common men and common things, but here stood one forth as singer and revealer, who was himself a common man, with eyes and mouth touched by the finger of God. And this poetry has a very distinctive value of its own. Its minute and loving observation of Nature is exceptionally accurate; and its pictures of the English peasant in his everyday life, agricultural pursuits, rural sports, fairy lore, hopes, fears, and hard struggles for daily bread, are those of one who, born in that class, had the soul and exceptionally keen sensibility of a poet. The verse is like a tender, modest, wild flower, with the dew of morning fresh upon it—like the note of a bird among green leaves. You are in the open air while you read this poetry, with the pulse stirred and the sense quickened. Yet it was not until he had acquired range and fluency of expression from books that he gave this deep intuition voice—though in the "Shepherd's Calendar," and even in the "Village Minstrel" volume, he occasionally did. His own homespun, racy diction was often far more telling than the conventional and polished vocabulary he adopted from other poets. However, he grew more

melodious, less loaded and cumbrous in style, after studying them, till in the latest "Asylum Poems," as now and then before, he attains to the true lyric; is often simple, musical and effective, with a wild artless melody, recalling Blake. What is lovelier in this way than "Graves of Infants"?—

> "A bud their lifetime, and a flower their close."
> "Each death was tolled on flowers, as summer gales went by."

Does not the gentle insanity that fell upon this poet give a savour of wildness, and a certain ethereal tone to the last poems, so as to render them treasures of quite singular value? And yet it must be granted that, before these were written, his imitations of some old poets are occasionally fine with a dignity quite unexpected—notably the lines to Milton, which he ascribed to Davenant.

Henry Drury, a Stamford bookseller, and kindly man, having been struck with his verse, introduced him to Mr. Taylor, who proved a good friend to him, and brought out his first volume in January, 1820. Drury had also introduced him to Mr. Gilchrist, who wrote a favourable article about his poems in the *Quarterly*, which about the same time published the unjust one upon Keats. Clare afterwards visited Mr. Taylor in London, where he gained two good friends, Lord Radstock, and Mrs. Emmerson, who greatly helped him. The latter became a Platonic flame of his. For the moment the *Quarterly* and other reviews made him popular. But he soon dropped out of fashion, and the succeeding volumes sold badly. Clare did not care for London; the big brick Babylon only bewildered him—he was not educated enough to be much impressed with

Westminster Abbey, nor even with the literary bigwigs, who treated him as a sort of rustic curiosity—though Charles Lamb may have dazzled, and Lord Exeter, who drove out to the fields near Helpston in a coach and four (flunkeys and all) to interview the poet, may have overawed him. It was the humble home he cared for,—the "home of homes" he called it,—the dark hut where he was born, and where his parents lived; and Patty of the vale, the good country girl he had married, and the bairns she bore him. The small allowance his patrons gave him, the interest on the sums subscribed for him, amounting to £45 per annum, with his increasing family, was not enough to keep his head above water, even with the manual labour he did. And his anxiety for his family, together with brain work, and manual toil, broke him slowly down. Drink, too, had something to do with it. This habit of drinking was first formed at Burghley, when he worked under the head gardener, who was a bad man. He resisted manfully, but succumbed sometimes. His last hope was to get a little farm of his own; and Lord Fitzwilliam, seeing his condition, offered him a pretty and more roomy cottage, with a little land attached to it at Northborough. But it was too late. He could not make up his mind to leave the beloved village, and was almost forced away from it. He had been wandering about his old haunts discontentedly for days, sometimes muttering incoherently; and when all was ready he followed the little cavalcade, guided by some friends, and walking mechanically with eyes half shut, as in a dream. His London admirers got him £50 from the Literary Fund, and generally

helped him in other ways; while a volume of new poems called the "Rural Muse" was now published by Whittaker, though little sold. But Clare's mind became worse, till at last he failed to recognise wife and children. He was then removed to the care of Dr. Allen, who kept a private asylum at High Beech, in Epping Forest. There he was kindly treated, and allowed to roam about the forest when he was not working in the garden. But he began to long for home again, and for his early lost love, Mary, having forgotten poor Patty completely. The poor mad poet's own account of his escape from the asylum and journey to Northborough on foot, with nothing to eat but grass picked from the roadside, is one of the most extraordinary and pitiful of extant records. He thought he had two wives; yet his real wife he did not recognise. The poet was then taken to the Northampton County Asylum, where he was left for twenty-two years alone; *one* of his children came *once*, but no patron, no friend, no admirer, no wife! None, save perhaps the girl he had first loved, in dreams.

His loneliness of spirit found vent in the verse, which Mr. Martin rightly terms "a sublime burst of poetry," commencing

"I am, yet what I am, who cares, who knows?"

Towards noon on May 20th, 1864, the dying poet said, "I want to go home;" and went. On the 25th his remains were taken back to Helpstone, and buried in the place of all the earth he had best loved, where now they rest.

RODEN NOEL.

EARLIER POEMS.

1820.

JOHN CLARE.

I.

SUMMER EVENING.

THE sinking sun is taking leave,
And sweetly gilds the edge of Eve,
While huddling clouds of purple dye,
Gloomy hang the western sky.
Crows crowd croaking over head,
Hastening to the woods to bed.
Cooing sits the lonely dove,
Calling home her absent love.
With "Kirchup! kirchup!" 'mong the wheats,
Partridge distant partridge greets;
Beckoning hints to those that roam,
That guide the squander'd covey home.
Swallows check their winding flight,
And twittering on the chimney light.
Round the pond the martins flirt,
Their snowy breasts bedaub'd with dirt,
While the mason, 'neath the slates,
Each mortar-bearing bird awaits:
By art untaught, each labouring spouse
Curious daubs his hanging house.
Bats flit by in hood and cowl;
Through the barn-hole pops the owl;
From the hedge, in drowsy hum,
Heedless buzzing beetles bum,

Haunting every bushy place,
Flopping in the labourer's face.
Now the snail hath made his ring;
And the moth with snowy wing
Circles round in winding whirls,
Through sweet evening's sprinkled pearls,
On each nodding rush besprent;
Dancing on from bent to bent:
Now to downy grasses clung,
Resting for a while he's hung;
Then, to ferry o'er the stream,
Vanishing as flies a dream;
Playful still his hours to keep,
Till his time has come to sleep;
In tall grass, by fountain head,
Weary then he drops to bed.
From the hay-cocks' moisten'd heaps,
Startled frogs take vaunting leaps;
And along the shaven mead,
Jumping travellers, they proceed:
Quick the dewy grass divides,
Moistening sweet their speckled sides;
From the grass to floweret's cup,
Quick the dew-drop bounces up.
Now the blue frog creeps along,
And the bird's forgot his song:
Flowers now sleep within their hoods;
Daisies button into buds;
From soiling dew the butter-cup
Shuts his golden jewels up;
And the rose and woodbine they
Wait again the smiles of day.
'Neath the willow's wavy boughs,
Dolly, singing, milks her cows;

While the brook, as bubbling by,
Joins in murmuring melody.
Dick and Dob, with jostling joll,
Homeward drag the rumbling roll;
Whilom Ralph, for Doll to wait,
Lolls him o'er the pasture gate.
Swains to fold their sheep begin;
Dogs loud barking drive them in.
Hedgers now along the road
Homeward bend beneath their load;
And from the long furrow'd seams,
Ploughmen loose their weary teams:
Ball, with urging lashes weal'd,
Still so slow to drive a-field,
Eager blundering from the plough,
Wants no whip to drive him now;
At the stable-door he stands,
Looking round for friendly hands
To loose the door its fast'ning pin,
And let him with his corn begin.
Round the yard, a thousand ways,
Beasts in expectation gaze,
Catching at the loads of hay
Passing fodd'rers tug away.
Hogs with grumbling deaf'ning noise,
Bother round the server boys;
And, far and near, the motley group
Anxious claim their suppering-up.

* * * * * *

Dark and darker glooms the sky;
Sleep 'gins close the labourer's eye:
Dobson leaves his greensward seat,
Neighbours where they neighbours meet
Crops to praise, and work in hand

And battles tell from foreign land.
While his pipe is puffing out,
Sue he's putting to the rout,
Gossiping, who takes delight
To shool her knitting out at night,
And back-bite neighbours 'bout the town—
Who's got new caps, and who a gown,
And many a thing, her evil eye
Can see they don't come honest by.
Chattering at a neighbour's house,
She hears call out her frowning spouse;
Prepar'd to start, she soodles home,
Her knitting twirling o'er her thumb,
As, loth to leave, afraid to stay,
She bawls her story all the way:
The tale so fraught with 'ticing charms,
The apron folded o'er her arms,
She leaves the unfinished tale in pain,
To end as evening comes again;
And in the cottage gangs with dread,
To meet old Dobson's timely frown,
Who grumbling sits, prepar'd for bed,
While she stands chelping 'bout the town. . .

II.

PATTY OF THE VALE.

WHERE lonesome woodlands close surrounding
Mark the spot a solitude,
And nature's uncheck'd scenes abounding
Form a prospect wild and rude,
A cottage cheers the spot so glooming,
Hid in the hollow of the dale,
Where, in youth and beauty blooming,
Lives sweet Patty of the Vale.

Gay as the lambs her cot surrounding,
Sporting wild the shades among,
O'er the hills and bushes bounding,
Artless, innocent, and young,
Fresh, as blush of morning roses
Ere the mid-day suns prevail,
Fair, as lily-bud uncloses,
Blooms sweet Patty of the Vale.

Low and humble though her station,
Dress though mean she's doom'd to wear,
Few superiors in the nation
With her beauty can compare.
What are riches?—not worth naming,
Though with some they may prevail;
Their's be choice of wealth proclaiming,
Mine is Patty of the Vale.

Fools may fancy wealth and fortune
Join to make a happy pair,
And for such the god importune,
With full many a fruitless prayer:
I, their pride and wealth disdaining
Should my humbler hopes prevail,
Happy then, would cease complaining,
Blest with Patty of the Vale.

III.

WHAT IS LIFE.

AND what is Life?—An hour-glass on the run,
A mist retreating from the morning sun,
A busy, bustling, still repeated dream;
Its length?—A minute's pause, a moment's thought;

And happiness?—A bubble on the stream,
That in the act of seizing shrinks to nought.

What are vain Hopes?—The puffing gale of morn,
That of its charms divests the dewy lawn,
And robs each flow'ret of its gem,—and dies,
A cobweb hiding disappointment's thorn,
Which stings more keenly through the thin disguise.

And thou, O Trouble?—nothing can suppose,
(And sure the Power of Wisdom only knows,)
What need requireth thee:
So free and liberal as thy bounty flows,
Some necessary cause must surely be:
But disappointments, pains, and every woe
Devoted wretches feel,
The universal plagues of life below,
Are mysteries still 'neath Fate's unbroken seal.

And what is Death?—Is still the cause unfound?
That dark, mysterious name of horrid sound?—
A long and lingering sleep, the weary crave.
And Peace?—Where can its happiness abound?—
No where at all, save heaven, and the grave.

Then what is Life?—When stripp'd of its disguise,
A thing to be desir'd it cannot be;
Since every thing that meets our foolish eyes
Gives proof sufficient of its vanity.
'Tis but a trial all must undergo;
To teach unthankful mortals how to prize
That happiness vain man's denied to know,
Until he's call'd to claim it in the skies.

IMITATIONS OF OLD POETS.

JOHN CLARE.

I.

THE VANITIES OF LIFE.

"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."—SOLOMON.

WHAT are life's joys and gains?
What pleasures crowd its ways,
That man should take such pains
To seek them all his days?
Sift this untoward strife
On which the mind is bent:
See if this chaff of life
Is worth the trouble spent.

Is pomp thy heart's desire?
Is power thy climbing aim?
Is love thy folly's fire?
Is wealth thy restless game?
Pomp, power, love, wealth, and all
Time's touchstone shall destroy
And, like base coin, prove all
Vain substitutes for joy.

Dost think that pride exalts
Thyself in other's eyes,
And hides thy folly's faults,
Which reason will despise?
Dost strut, and turn, and stride,
Like a walking weathercock?
The shadow by thy side
Will be thy ape, and mock.

Dost think that power's disguise
Can make thee mighty seem?
It may in folly's eyes,
But not in worth's esteem,
When all that thou canst ask,
And all that she can give,
Is but a paltry mask
Which tyrants wear and live.

Go, let thy fancies range
And ramble where they may;
View power in every change,
And what is the display?
—The county magistrate,
The lowest shade in power,
To rulers of the state,
The meteors of an hour:—

View all, and mark the end
Of every proud extreme,
Where flattery turns a friend,
And counterfeits esteem;
Where worth is aped in show,
That doth her name purloin,
Like toys of golden glow
Oft sold for copper coin.

Ambition's haughty nod
With fancies may deceive,
Nay, tell thee thou'rt a god,
And wilt thou such believe?
Go, bid the seas be dry;
Go, hold earth like a ball,
Or throw her fancies by,
For God can do it all.

Dost thou possess the dower
Of laws to spare or kill ?
Call it not heavenly power
When but a tyrant's will.
Think what thy God would do,
And know thyself a fool,
Nor, tyrant-like, pursue
Where He alone can rule.

Dost think, when wealth is won
Thy heart has its desire ?
Hold ice up to the sun,
And wax before the fire ;
Nor triumph o'er the reign
Which they so soon resign :
Of this world weigh the gain,
Insurance safe is thine.

Dost think life's peace secure
In houses and in land ?
Go, read the fairy lure,
And twist a cord in sand ;
Lodge stones upon the sky,
Hold water in a sieve,
Nor give such tales the lie,
And still thine own believe.

Whoso with riches deals,
And thinks peace bought and sold,
Will find them slipping eels,
That slide the firmest hold :
Though sweet as sleep with health
Thy lulling luck may be,
Pride may o'erstride thy wealth
And check prosperity.

Dost think that beauty's power
Life sweetest pleasure gives?
Go, pluck the summer flower,
And see how long it lives:
Behold, the rays glide on
Along the summer plain
Ere thou canst say they're gone:—
Know such is beauty's reign.

Look on the brightest eye,
Nor teach it to be proud;
View next the clearest sky,
And thou shalt find a cloud;
Nor call each face ye meet
An angel's 'cause it's fair,
But look beneath your feet,
And think of what ye are.

Who thinks that love doth live
In beauty's tempting show,
Shall find his hopes ungive,
And melt in reason's thaw.
Who thinks that pleasure lies
In every fairy bower,
Shall oft, to his surprise,
Find poison in the flower.

Dost lawless pleasures grasp?
Judge not they'll bring thee joy
Their flowers but hide the asp,
Whose poison will destroy.
Who trusts a harlot's smile,
And by her wiles is led,
Plays, with a sword the while
Hung dropping o'er his head.

Dost doubt my warning song?
Then doubt the sun gives light,
Doubt truth to teach thee wrong,
Think wrong alone is right;
And live as lives the knave,
Intrigue's deceiving guest;
Be tyrant, or be slave,
As suits thy ends the best

Or pause amid thy toils
For visions won and lost,
And count the fancied spoils,
If e'er they quit the cost:
And if they still possess
Thy mind, as worthy things,
Pick straws with Bedlam Bess,
And call them diamond rings.

Thy folly's past advice,
Thy heart's already won,
Thy fall's above all price,
So go, and be undone;
For all who thus prefer
The seeming great for small
Shall make wine vinegar,
And sweetest honey gall.

Would'st heed the truths I sing,
To profit wherewithal,
Clip folly's wanton wing,
And keep her within call.
I've little else to give,
But thou canst easy try;
The lesson how to live
Is but to learn to die.

II.

TO JOHN MILTON,

"FROM HIS HONOURED FRIEND, WILLIAM DAVENANT.

POET of mighty power, I fain
Would court the muse that honoured thee,
And, like Elisha's spirit, gain
A part of thy intensity;
And share the mantle which she flung
Around thee, when thy lyre was strung.

Though faction's scorn at first did shun,
With coldness, thy inspired song,
Though clouds of malice pass'd thy sun,
They could not hide it long;
Its brightness soon exhaled away
Dark night, and gained eternal day.

The critics' wrath did darkly frown
Upon thy muse's mighty lay;
But blasts that break the blossom down
Do only stir the bay;
And thine shall flourish, green and long,
In the eternity of song.

Thy genius saw, in quiet mood,
Gilt fashion's follies pass thee by,
And, like the monarch of the wood,
Tower'd o'er it to the sky;
Where thou could'st sing of other spheres,
And feel the fame of future years.

Though bitter sneers and stinging scorns
Did throng the muse's dangerous way,
Thy powers were past such little thorns,
They gave thee no dismay;
The scoffer's insult pass'd thee by,
Thou smild'st and mad'st him no reply.

Envy will gnaw its heart away
To see thy genius gather root;
And as its flowers their sweets display
Scorn's malice shall be mute;
Hornets that summer warmed to fly,
Shall at the death of summer die.

Though friendly praise hath but its hour,
And little praise with thee hath been;
The bay may lose its summer flower,
But still its leaves are green;
And thine, whose buds are on the shoot,
Shall only fade to change to fruit.

Fame lives not in the breath of words,
In public praises' hue and cry;
The music of these summer birds
Is silent in a winter sky,
When thine shall live and flourish on,
O'er wrecks where crowds of fames are gone.

The ivy shuns the city wall,
When busy-clamorous crowds intrude,
And climbs the desolated hall
In silent solitude;
The time-worn arch, the fallen dome,
Are roots for its eternal home.

The bard his glory ne'er receives
Where summer's common flowers are seen,
But winter finds it when she leaves
    The laurel only green;
And time, from that eternal tree,
Shall weave a wreath to honour thee.

Nought but thy ashes shall expire;
Thy genius, at thy obsequies,
Shall kindle up its living fire
    And light the muse's skies;
Ay, it shall rise, and shine, and be
A sun in song's posterity.

ASYLUM POEMS.

1842—1864.

JOHN CLARE.

I.—GRAVES OF INFANTS.

INFANTS' gravemounds are steps of angels, where
Earth's brightest gems of innocence repose.
God is their parent, so they need no tear;
He takes them to his bosom from earth's woes,
A bud their lifetime and a flower their close.
Their spirits are the Iris of the skies,
Needing no prayers; a sunset's happy close.
Gone are the bright rays of their soft blue eyes;
Flowers weep in dew-drops o'er them, and the gale
gently sighs.

Their lives were nothing but a sunny shower,
Melting on flowers as tears melt from the eye.
Each death * * *
Was tolled on flowers as Summer gales went by.
They bowed and trembled, yet they heaved no sigh,
And the sun smiled to show the end was well.
Infants have nought to weep for ere they die;
All prayers are needless, beads they need not tell,
White flowers their mourners are, Nature their
passing bell.

II.—BONNY LASSIE O!

O THE evening's for the fair, bonny lassie O!
To meet the cooler air and join an angel there,
With the dark dishevelled hair,
Bonny lassie O!

The bloom's on the brere, bonny lassie O!
Oak apples on the tree; and wilt thou gang to see
The shed I've made for thee,
Bonny lassie O!

'Tis agen the running brook, bonny lassie O!
In a grassy nook hard by, with a little patch of sky,
And a bush to keep us dry,
Bonny lassie O!

There's the daisy all the year, bonny lassie O!
There's the king-cup bright as gold, and the speedwell never cold,
And the arum leaves unrolled,
Bonny lassie O!

O meet me at the shed, bonny lassie O!
With the woodbine peeping in, and the roses like thy skin
Blushing, thy praise to win,
Bonny lassie O!

I will meet thee there at e'en, bonny lassie O!
When the bee sips in the bean, and grey willow branches lean,
And the moonbeam looks between,
Bonny lassie O!

III.—THE TELL-TALE FLOWERS.

AND has the Spring's all glorious eye
No lesson to the mind?
The birds that cleave the golden sky—
Things to the earth resigned—
Wild flowers that dance to every wind—
Do they no memory leave behind?

Aye, flowers! The very name of flowers,
That bloom in wood and glen,
Brings Spring to me in Winter's hours,
And childhood's dreams again.
The primrose on the woodland lea
Was more than gold and lands to me.

The violets by the woodland side
Are thick as they could thrive;
I've talked to them with childish pride
As things that were alive:
I find them now in my distress—
They seem as sweet, yet valueless.

The cowslips on the meadow lea,
How have I run for them!
I looked with wild and childish glee
Upon each golden gem:
And when they bowed their heads so shy
I laughed, and thought they danced for joy.

And when a man, in early years,
How sweet they used to come,
And give me tales of smiles and tears,
And thoughts more dear than home:
Secrets which words would then reprove—
They told the names of early love.

The primrose turned a babbling flower
Within its sweet recess:
I blushed to see its secret bower,
And turned her name to bless.
The violets said the eyes were blue:
I loved, and did they tell me true?

The cowslips, blooming everywhere,
My heart's own thoughts could steal:
I nip't them that they should not hear:
They smiled, and would reveal;
And o'er each meadow, right or wrong,
They sing the name I've worshipped long.

The brook that mirrored clear the sky—
Full well I know the spot;
The mouse-ear looked with bright blue eye,
And said "Forget-me-not."
And from the brook I turned away,
But heard it many an after day.

The king-cup on its slender stalk,
Within the pasture dell,
Would picture there a pleasant walk
With one I loved so well.
It said "How sweet at eventide
'Twould be, with true love at thy side."

And on the pasture's woody knoll
I saw the wild bluebell,
On Sundays where I used to stroll
With her I loved so well:
She culled the flowers the year before;
These bowed, and told the story o'er.

And every flower that had a name
Would tell me who was fair;
But those without, as strangers, came
And blossomed silent there:
I stood to hear, but all alone:
They bloomed and kept their thoughts unknown.

But seasons now have nought to say,
The flowers no news to bring:
Alone I live from day to day—
Flowers deck the bier of Spring;
And birds upon the bush or tree
All sing a different tale to me.

IV.—HOME YEARNINGS.

O FOR that sweet, untroubled rest
That poets oft have sung!—
The babe upon its mother's breast
The bird upon its young,
The heart asleep without a pain—
When shall I know that sleep again?

When shall I be as I have been
Upon my mother's breast—
Sweet Nature's garb of verdant green
To woo to perfect rest—
Love in the meadow, field, and glen,
And in my native wilds again?

The sheep within the fallow field,
The herd upon the green,
The larks that in the thistle shield,
And pipe from morn to e'en—
O for the pasture, fields, and fen!
When shall I see such rest again?

I love the weeds along the fen,
More sweet than garden flowers,
For freedom haunts the humble glen
That blest my happiest hours.
Here prison injures health and me:
I love sweet freedom and the free.

The crows upon the swelling hills,
The cows upon the lea,
Sheep feeding by the pasture rills,
Are ever dear to me,
Because sweet freedom is their mate,
While I am lone and desolate.

I loved the winds when I was young,
When life was dear to me;
I loved the song which Nature sung,
Endearing liberty;
I loved the wood, the vale, the stream,
For there my boyhood used to dream.

There even toil itself was play;
'Twas pleasure e'en to weep;
'Twas joy to think of dreams by day,
The beautiful of sleep.
When shall I see the wood and plain,
And dream those happy dreams again?

V.—LOVE LIVES BEYOND THE TOMB.

LOVE lives beyond the tomb,
And earth, which fades like dew!
I love the fond,
The faithful, and the true.

Love lives in sleep:
'Tis happiness of healthy dreams:
Eve's dews may weep,
But love delightful seems.

'Tis seen in flowers,
And in the morning's pearly dew;
In earth's green hours,
And in the heaven's eternal blue.

'Tis heard in Spring,
When light and sunbeams, warm and kind,
On angel's wing
Bring love and music to the mind.

And where's the voice,
So young, so beautiful, and sweet
As Nature's choice,
Where Spring and lovers meet?

Love lives beyond the tomb,
And earth, which fades like dew!
I love the fond,
The faithful, and the true.

VI.—MY EARLY HOME.

HERE sparrows build upon the trees,
And stockdove hides her nest;
The leaves are winnowed by the breeze
Into a calmer rest;
The black-cap's song was very sweet,
That used the rose to kiss;
It made the Paradise complete:
My early home was this.

The red-breast from the sweet briar bush
Drop't down to pick the worm;
On the horse-chestnut sang the thrush,
O'er the house where I was born;
The moonlight, like a shower of pearls,
Fell o'er this "bower of bliss,"
And on the bench sat boys and girls:
My early home was this.

The old house stooped just like a cave,
Thatched o'er with mosses green;
Winter around the walls would rave,
But all was calm within;
The trees are here all green agen,
Here bees the flowers still kiss,
But flowers and trees seemed sweeter then:
My early home was this.

VII.—I AM! YET WHAT I AM.

I AM! yet what I am who cares, or knows?
My friends forsake me, like a memory lost.
I am the self-consumer of my woes,
They rise and vanish, an oblivious host,
Shadows of life, whose very soul is lost.
And yet I am—I live—though I am toss'd.

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,
Into the living sea of waking dream,
Where there is neither sense of life, nor joys,
But the huge shipwreck of my own esteem
And all that's dear. Even those I loved the best
Are strange—nay, they are stranger than the rest.

I long for scenes where man has never trod—
For scenes where woman never smiled or wept—
There to abide with my Creator, God,
And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,
Full of high thoughts, unborn. So let me lie,
The grass below; above, the vaulted sky.

Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd.

1795—1854.

THOMAS NOON TALFOURD was born on the 26th of January, 1795. His father, Edward Talfourd, was a brewer at Reading, and his mother, the daughter of Thomas Noon, a Nonconformist minister. Young Talfourd was educated partly at the Dissenters' grammar school at Mill Hill, and partly under Dr. Valpy, (to whom he afterwards dedicated his tragedy, "Ion,") at the grammar school at Reading. In 1813 he entered at the Middle Temple, and, while pursuing his legal studies, contributed articles to the *New Monthly* and the *Edinburgh*, and reported law cases for the *Times*. He was called to the Bar in 1821, was made a Serjeant-at-Law in 1833, acted as Recorder of Reading for some years, and became Judge of Common Pleas in 1849. He represented Reading in the House of Commons as a Whig, first from 1835 to 1841, and again from 1847 till 1849, signalising his parliamentary career by drafting and securing the passing of the Copyright Act of 1842. His tragedy of "Ion," which was printed for private circulation, in 1835, came under the notice of Macready, who produced it with great success at Covent Garden in May 1836. "The Massacre of Glencoe," a domestic drama, followed, after which came "The Athenian Captive" produced at the Haymarket in 1838. Talfourd also published the "Memoirs and

Correspondence of Charles Lamb" 1837, "Final Memoirs" 1848, and "Vacation Rambles."

Of his dramatic works "Ion" was the most, and "The Massacre of Glencoe" the least, successful. It was in the treatment of classical subjects that he produced his best results. "Ion" is characterised by the simplicity and dignity belonging to its Greek theme. The misrule of the race of Argus had angered the gods and brought its punishment upon the people in the form of a pestilence, which the Oracle of Delphi had declared should only pass away with the extinction of the guilty race. "Ion," the last of his line, on being declared the rightful heir to the throne, with true Greek devotion to the common weal offers himself a sacrifice of propitiation, and secures the removal of the curse. This scene, given in the following pages, is an illustration of the author's style at its best.

Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd was seized with a fit of apoplexy, and died while addressing the Grand Jury at Stafford Assizes, 1854.

"He was speaking," says the *Athenæum*, "of the increase of crime—of the neglect of the rich, the ignorance of the poor, of the want of clearer knowledge and more vital sympathy between class and class . . . when his face flushed, and he leaned forward on his desk as if the Judge were bowed in prayer by some sharp and overpowering emotion. . . . In a few seconds he was gone."

It was as though the Oracle had demanded of the author of "Ion" a like sacrifice for the sufferings that he deplored, and the poet was not found wanting in the patriot's devotion.

ALFRED H. MILES.

ION.

1835.

THOMAS NOON TALFOURD.

From Act V., Scene II.—*The Temple.*

Clemanthe *and* Ion *in converse.*

Clem. Thou dost accuse
Thy state too hardly. It may give some room,
Some little space, amidst its radiant cares
For love and joy to breathe in.
Ion. Not for me:
My pomp must be most lonesome, far removed
From that sweet fellowship of human kind
The slave rejoices in: my solemn robes
Shall wrap me as a panoply of ice,
And the attendants who may throng around me
Shall want the flatteries which may basely warm
The sceptred thing they circle. Dark and cold
Stretches the path, which, when I wear the crown,
I needs must enter:—the great gods forbid
That thou shouldst follow in it!
Clem. O unkind!
And shall we never see each other?
Ion (*After a pause.*) Yes!
I have ask'd that dreadful question of the hills
That look eternal; of the flowing streams
That lucid flow for ever; of the stars,
Amid whose fields of azure my raised spirit
Hath trod in glory: all were dumb; but now

While I thus gaze upon thy living face,
I feel the love that kindles through its beauty
Can never wholly perish;—we *shall* meet
Again, Clemanthe!

Clem. Bless thee for that name;
Call me that name again; thy words sound strangely,
Yet they breathe kindness. Shall we meet indeed?
Think not I would intrude upon thy cares,
Thy councils, or thy pomps;—to sit at distance,
To weave, with the nice labour which preserves
The rebel pulses even, from gay threads
Bright pictures of thy deeds, and sometimes catch
The falling music of a gracious word,
Or the stray sunshine of a smile, will be
Comfort enough:—do not deny me this;
Or if stern fate compel thee to deny,
Kill me at once!

Ion. No; thou must live, my fair one:
There are a thousand joyous things in life,
Which pass unheeded in a life of joy
As thine hath been, till fitful sorrow comes
To ruffle it; and daily duties paid
Hardly at first, at length will bring repose
To the sad mind that studies to perform them.
Thou dost not mark me.

Clem. Oh, I do! I do!

Ion. If for thy brother's and thy father's sake
Thou art content to live, the healer, Time
Will reconcile thee to the lovely things
Of this delightful world,—and if another,
A happier —no, I cannot bid thee love
Another!—I did think I could have said it,
But 'tis in vain.

Clem. Thou art mine own then still?

Ion. I am thine own ! thus let me clasp thee ; nearer
O joy too thrilling and too short !

Enter AGENOR.

Agenor. My lord,
The sacrificial rites await thy presence.

Ion. I come.—One more embrace—the last, the last
In this world ! Now farewell !

[*Exeunt* AGENOR *and* ION.

Clem. The last embrace !
Then he has cast me off !—No, 'tis not so ;
Some mournful secret of his fate divides us :
I'll struggle to bear that, and snatch a comfort
From seeing him uplifted. I will look
Upon him in his state ; Minerva's shrine
Will shelter me from vulgar gaze ; I'll hasten,
And feast my sad eyes with his greatness there !

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*The Great Square of the City,—on one side a Throne of state prepared,—on the other an Altar,—the Statues decorated with garlands.*

* * * * *

Enter Procession, MEDON, AGENOR, PHOCION, TIMOCLES, CLEON, *Sages, and People ;* ION *last, in royal robes. He advances amidst shouts, and speaks.*

Ion. I thank you for your greeting—Shout no more,
But in deep silence raise your hearts to Heaven,
That it may strengthen one so young and frail
As I am, for the business of this hour.
Must I sit here ?

Medon. Permit thy earliest friend,

Who propp'd in infancy thy tottering steps,
To lead thee to thy throne,—and thus fulfil
His fondest vision.

Ion. Thou art still most kind—

Medon. Nay, do not think of me, my son! my son!
What ails thee? When thou shouldst reflect the joy
Of Argos, the strange paleness of the grave
Marbles thy face.

Ion. Am I indeed so pale?
It is a solemn office I assume;
Yet thus, with Phœbus' blessing, I embrace it.

[*Sits on the throne.*

Stand forth, Agenor!

Agenor. I await thy will.

Ion. To thee I look as to the wisest friend
Of this afflicted people;—thou must leave
Awhile the quiet which thy life hath earn'd,
To rule our councils; fill the seats of justice
With good men not so absolute in goodness,
As to forget what human frailty is;
And order my sad country.

Agenor. Pardon me——

Ion. Nay, I will promise 'tis my last request;
Thou never could'st deny me what I sought
In boyish wantonness, and shalt not grudge
Thy wisdom to me, till our state revive
From its long anguish;—it will not be long
If Heaven approve me here. Thou hast all power
Whether I live or die.

Agenor. Die! I am old——

Ion. Death is not jealous of thy mild decay,
Which gently wins thee his; exulting youth
Provokes the ghastly monarch's sudden stride,
And makes his horrid fingers quick to clasp

His shivering prey at noontide. Let me see
The captain of the guard.
Crythes. I kneel to crave
Humbly the favour which thy sire bestow'd
On one who loved him well.
Ion. I cannot thank thee,
That wakest the memory of my father's weakness;
But I will not forget that thou hast shared
The light enjoyments of a noble spirit,
And learn'd the need of luxury. I grant
For thee and thy brave comrades, ample share
Of such rich treasure as my stores contain,
To grace thy passage to some distant land,
Where, if an honest cause engage thy sword,
May glorious laurels wreath it! In our realm
We shall not need it longer.
Crythes. Dost intend
To banish the firm troops before whose valour
Barbarian millions shrink appall'd, and leave
Our city naked to the first assault
Of reckless foes?
Ion. No, Crythes!—in ourselves,
In our own honest hearts and chainless hands
Will be our safeguard:—while we seek no use
Of arms we would not have our children blend
With their first innocent wishes; while the love
Of Argos and of justice shall be one
To their young reason; while their sinews grow
Firm 'midst the gladness of heroic sports:
We shall not ask to guard our country's peace
One selfish passion, or one venal sword.
I would not grieve thee;—but thy valiant troop—
For I esteem them valiant—must no more
With luxury which suits a desperate camp

Infect us. See that they embark, Agenor,
Ere night.
Crythes. My lord——
Ion. No more—my word has pass'd.
Medon, there is no office I can add
To those thou hast grown old in; thou wilt guard
The shrine of Phœbus, and within thy home—
Thy too delightful home—befriend the stranger
As thou didst me;—there sometimes waste a thought
On thy spoil'd inmate!
Medon. Think of thee, my lord?
Long shall we triumph in thy glorious reign—
Ion. Prithee no more. Argives! I have a boon
To crave of you;—whene'er I shall rejoin
In death the father from whose heart in life
Stern fate divided me, think gently of him!
For ye, who saw him in his full-blown pride,
Knew little of affections crush'd within,
And wrongs which nurtur'd frenzy; yet no more
Let the great interests of the state depend
Upon the thousand chances that may sway
A piece of human frailty! Swear to me
That ye will seek hereafter in yourselves
The means of sovereign rule:—our narrow space,
So happy in its confines, so compact,
Needs not the magic of a single name
Which wider regions may require to draw
Their interests into one; but, circled thus,
Like a bless'd family by simple laws,
May tenderly be govern'd; all degrees
Moulded together as a single form
Of breathing loveliness, which finest chords
Of sympathy pervading shall suffuse
In times of quiet with one bloom, and fill

With one resistless impulse, if the hosts
Of foreign power should threaten. Swear to me
That ye will do this!

Medon. Wherefore ask this now?
Thou shalt live long;—the paleness of thy face
Which late appall'd me wears a glory now,
And thine eyes kindle with the prophecy
Of lustrous years.

Ion. The gods approve me then!
Yet I will use the function of a king,
And claim obedience. Promise if I leave
No issue, that the sovereign power shall live
In the affections of the general heart,
And in the wisdom of the best.

Medon and others. We swear it!

Ion. Hear and record the oath, immortal powers!
Now give me leave a moment to approach
That altar unattended. [*He goes to the altar.*
Gracious gods!
In whose mild service my glad youth was spent,
Look on me now;—and if there is a Power,
As at this solemn time I feel there is,
Beyond ye, that has breathed through all your shapes
The Spirit of the Beautiful that lives
In earth and heaven;—to ye I offer up
This conscious being, full of life and love,
For my dear country's welfare. Let this blow
End all her sorrows! [*Stabs himself and falls.*

* * * * *

CLEMANTHE *rushes forward.*

Clem. Hold!
Let me support him—stand away—indeed—
I have best right, although ye know it not,
To cling to him in death.

Ion. This is a joy
I did not hope for—this is sweet indeed.—
Bend thine eyes on me!
Clem. And for this it was
Thou wouldst have wean'd me from thee? Couldst thou think
I would be so divorced?
Ion. Thou art right, Clemanthe,—
It was a shallow and an idle thought;
'Tis past; no show of coldness frets us now;
No vain disguise, my love. Yet thou wilt think
On that which, when I feign'd I truly said—
Wilt thou not, sweet one?
Clem. I will treasure all.

Enter IRUS.

Irus. I bring you glorious tidings—Ha! no joy
Can enter here.
Ion. Yes—is it as I hope?
Irus. The pestilence abates.
Ion. (*Springs to his feet.*) Do ye not hear?
Why shout ye not?—ye are strong—think not of me;
Hearken! the curse my ancestry has spread
O'er Argos is dispell'd—Agenor, give
This gentle youth his freedom, who hath brought
Sweet tidings that I shall not die in vain—
And Medon! cherish him as thou hast one
Who dying blesses thee;—my own Clemanthe!
Let this console thee also—Argos lives—
The offering is accepted—all is well! [*Dies.*

Thomas Carlyle.

1795—1881.

THOMAS CARLYLE was born at Ecclefechan, in the county of Dumfries, December 4th, 1795. His father, a mason, a most typical specimen of the Scottish peasant's hard exterior and substantial inner worth, gave his promising son the best education he could afford with the view of qualifying him for the ministry, a purpose frustrated by the youth's entire want of vocation. After passing creditably through the University of Edinburgh, he taught school successively at Annan and at Kirkcaldy, tried a literary career at Edinburgh with little success, and returned home a martyr to dyspepsia and morbid melancholy. The former continued to afflict him all his life, his deliverance from the latter is graphically narrated in his "Sartor Resartus." Contemporaneously with this release (1821) he met the lady destined to become his wife, and took the first step to fame and fortune by utilising the knowledge he had acquired of German. His translation of Wilhelm Meister made him a disciple of Goethe and the chief exponent of German thought to England. During part of this period he acted as tutor in the Buller family, accompanying them to London, and in 1826 he married the object of his admiration, Jane Welsh. She was a relation of Jeffrey, and the marriage opened the

Edinburgh Review to Carlyle. The splendid essays subsequently collected as his "Miscellanies," began to appear there, and were continued in *Fraser's Magazine*. For several years, nevertheless, his life was one of struggle; he found it hard to live in Edinburgh, and retreated to the bleak solitude of Craigenputtock in his native county, where he received the visit of Emerson. At length (1834) he resolved to migrate to London, and there, amid disappointments and privations, devoted himself to his epical "History of the French Revolution." It appeared in 1837, and at once established his fame with thinking readers. A still more remarkable work, the intensely original and absolutely nondescript "Sartor Resartus," the culmination of his earnestness and his humour, was now dragged from the back numbers of *Fraser*, and Carlyle's fame was still further enhanced by appearances as a public lecturer, which made him a leading figure in London intellectual society. "Chartism," 1839; "Hero Worship," 1841; "Past and Present," 1843; "Oliver Cromwell," 1845, confirmed his literary renown, which suffered from the exaggeration of his "Latter Day Pamphlets," 1850, but was fully restored by his last important works, his biographies of Sterling and Frederick the Great. His life during this period was void of external incident, save for some years of unfortunate misunderstanding with his wife, terminating in a full reconciliation. Mrs. Carlyle's sudden death in 1866, just after her husband's installation as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University, inflicted a blow upon him from which he never recovered. His latter years of failing health and broken spirits were prolonged until February

1881. No writer of our day has exercised so wide or so beneficial an influence, and the temporary depreciation of his character occasioned by indiscreet publications after his death is fast giving way to befitting emotions of reverence and gratitude.

It is more common to find writers possessed of every external accomplishment for poetry failing for want of the internal faculty, than to encounter a true poetical genius paralysed from an utter obtuseness to poetical form. Thomas Carlyle is one of these rare instances. In the broad sense he was a very great poet. The most eloquent passages in his writings are only too far above the level of ordinary prose; his "French Revolution," is the one true epic of his age. His exercises in metre are, nevertheless, quite insignificant in comparison with his powers; and chiefly important as practical refutations of the great error in criticism into which he was betrayed by their failure. He wished to be a poet. The objects of his literary worship—Shakespeare, Dante, Goethe, Burns,—were all poets. When he found himself unable to approach them he fell back upon a theory of poetry which swept away all the special endowments which have in all ages been deemed essential to the poetic character. "Poetry," he says, "is no separate faculty, no organ which can be superadded to the rest, or disjoined from them, but rather the result of their general harmony and completion." The simplest song of Goethe or Burns shows that there *is* a faculty which needs to be superadded to the rest ere a poem can be produced; the faculty, namely, of verbal music. Carlyle might just as well have tried to teach himself to paint as to sing; and hence, in the ordinary

sense, he never was, and never could be, a poet. This divine "faculty" of song seems correlated with the divine "vision" which enables a man to discern that poetry, though doubtless most effective when co-existing with intellectual force and spiritual insight, is not identical with either of these things, and may exist perfectly well without them. Carlyle's own experiments in verse are conclusive proofs of the converse of this truth. Let him say what he will, it is evident that form and melody are essential to poetry, and that they are things which the most powerful intelligence must fail to acquire without "an organ superadded to the rest."

The demand for poetical form is to Carlyle what the vase is to the imprisoned Genie, abolish it and the mighty figure overshadows land and sea. When no longer required to write as the poet, Carlyle first becomes the poet; the ear so insensible to metrical harmony develops a fine sense for the voluminous harmonies of prose; he is not only sublime but rhythmical. Unfortunately the plan of this collection excludes Carlyle the poet; we can only exhibit Carlyle the verse writer, cramped and shorn for want of the special endowment of which he denied the existence. Yet he could write nothing wholly uninteresting, and in the least successful of his metrical experiments there is a something which the world will not let die. It is significant that the most successful of his acknowledged attempts should be his rendering of Goethe's Helena in the twelve-syllabled iambics of the original, in our language a stately, but stilted metre, absolutely devoid of every variety of rhythm.

We have said "acknowledged," deeming that his

biographer, W. H. Wylie, may be right in ascribing to him the lines on "Drumwhinn Bridge," which appeared in Leigh Hunt's *London Journal*, for October 22nd, 1834. The suggestion is strongly supported by the place and time of publication, no less than by the locality of the subject and the general sentiment of the verses. On the other hand are to be considered their superiority to Carlyle's acknowledged poems in form and melody, and the uncharacteristic absence of any phrase absolutely narrowing the question to one between "Teufelsdröckh" and "Teufel." The reader shall judge for himself:—

DRUMWHINN BRIDGE.

OVER THE RIVER ORR.—BUILT, 1832.

November 1832.

Meek autumn midnight glancing,
The stars above hold sway,
I bend, in muse advancing,
To lonesome Orr my way.

Its rush in drowsy even
Can make the waste less dead:
Short pause beneath void Heaven
Then back again to bed!

Hoho! 'mong deserts moory,
See here the craftsman's hand;
Vain now, bleak Orr, thy fury,
On whinstone arch I stand.

Dull Orr, thou moorland river
By man's eye rarely seen,
Thou gushest on for ever,
And wert while earth has been.

There o'er thy crags and gravel,
Thou sing'st an unknown song,
In tongue no clerks unravel!
Thou'st sung it long and long.

From Being's Source it bounded,
The morn when time began;
Since thro' this moor has sounded,
Unheard or heard of man.

That day they crossed the Jordan,
When Hebrew trumpets rang,
Thy wave no foot was fording,
Yet here in moor it sang.

And I, while thou'st meandered,
Was not, have come to be,
Apart so long have wandered,
This moment meet with thee.

Old Orr, thou mystic water!
No Ganges holier is;
That was Creation's daughter;
What was it fashioned *this*?

The whinstone Bridge is builded,
Will hang a hundred year;
When bridge to time has yielded,
The brook will still be here.

Farewell, poor moorland river:
We parted and we met;
Thy journeyings are for ever;
Mine are not ended yet.

RICHARD GARNETT.

FRACTIONS.

1823—1833.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

I.—TRAGEDY OF THE NIGHT-MOTH.

MAGNA AUSUS.

'TIS placid midnight, stars are keeping
Their meek and silent course in heaven;
Save pale recluse, for knowledge seeking,
All mortal things to sleep are given.

But see! a wandering Night-moth enters,
Allured by taper gleaming bright;
A while keeps hovering round, then ventures
On Goethe's mystic page to light.

With awe she views the candle blazing;
A universe of fire it seems
To moth-*savante* with rapture gazing,
Or Fount whence Life and Motion streams.

What passions in her small heart whirling,
Hopes boundless, adoration, dread;
At length her tiny pinions twirling,
She darts, and—puff!—the moth is dead!

The sullen flame, for her scarce sparkling,
Gives but one hiss, one fitful glare;
Now bright and busy, now all darkling,
She snaps and fades to empty air.

Her bright gray form that spread so slimly,
Some fan she seemed of pigmy Queen;
Her silky cloak that lay so trimly,
Her wee, wee eyes that looked so keen,

Last moment here, now gone forever,
To naught are passed with fiery pain;
And ages circling round shall never
Give to this creature shape again!

Poor moth! near weeping I lament thee,
Thy glossy form, thy instant woe;
'Twas zeal for "things too high" that sent thee
From cheery earth to shades below.

Short speck of boundless Space was needed
For home, for kingdom, world to thee!
Where passed unheeding as unheeded
Thy little life from sorrow free.

But syren hopes from out thy dwelling
Enticed thee, bade thee earth explore,—
Thy frame, so late with rapture swelling,
Is swept from earth forevermore!

Poor moth! thy fate my own resembles:
Me too a restless asking mind
Hath sent on far and weary rambles,
To seek the good I ne'er shall find.

Like thee, with common lot contented,
With humble joys and vulgar fate,
I might have lived and ne'er lamented,
Moth of a larger size, a longer date!

But Nature's majesty unveiling
What seem'd her wildest, grandest charms,
Eternal Truth and Beauty hailing,
Like thee, I rushed into her arms.

What gained we, little moth? Thy ashes,
Thy one brief parting pang may show:
And thoughts like these, for soul that dashes
From deep to deep, are—death more slow.

II.—CUI BONO?

WHAT is Hope? A smiling rainbow
Children follow through the wet;
'Tis not here, still yonder, yonder:
Never urchin found it yet.

What is Life? A thawing iceboard
On a sea with sunny shore;—
Gay we sail; it melts beneath us;
We are sunk, and seen no more.

What is Man? A foolish baby,
Vainly strives, and fights, and frets;
Demanding all, deserving nothing;—
One small grave is what he gets.

III.—THE SOWER'S SONG.

NOW hands to seedsheet, boys,
We step and we cast; old Time's on wing
And would ye partake of Harvest's joys,
The corn must be sown in Spring.

Fall gently and still, good corn,
Lie warm in thy earthy bed;
And stand so yellow some morn,
For beast and man must be fed.

Old Earth is a pleasure to see
In sunshiny cloak of red and green;
The furrow lies fresh; this Year will be
As Years that are past have been.
Fall gently and still, good corn,
Lie warm in thy earthy bed;
And stand so yellow some morn,
For beast and man must be fed.

Old Mother, receive this corn,
The son of Six Thousand golden sires:
All these on thy kindly breast were born;
One more thy poor child requires.
Fall gently and still, good corn,
Lie warm in thy earthy bed;
And stand so yellow some morn,
For beast and man must be fed.

Now steady and sure again,
And measure of stroke and step we keep;
Thus up and thus down we cast our grain:
Sow well, and you gladly reap.
Fall gently and still, good corn,
Lie warm in thy earthy bed;
And stand so yellow some morn,
For beast and man must be fed.

IV.—ADIEU.

LET time and chance combine, combine,
Let time and chance combine ;
The fairest love from heaven above,
That love of yours was mine,
My dear,
That love of yours was mine.

The past is fled and gone, and gone,
The past is fled and gone ;
If nought but pain to me remain,
I'll fare in memory on,
My dear,
I'll fare in memory on.

The saddest tears must fall, must fall,
The saddest tears must fall ;
In weal or woe, in this world below,
I love you ever and all,
My dear,
I love you ever and all.

A long road full of pain, of pain,
A long road full of pain ;
One soul, one heart, sworn ne'er to part,—
We ne'er can meet again,
My dear,
We ne'er can meet again.

Hard fate will not allow, allow,
Hard fate will not allow ;
We blessed were as the angels are,—
Adieu forever now,
My dear,
Adieu, forever now.

V.—THE BEETLE.

POOR hobbling Beetle, needst not haste;
Should Traveller Traveller thus alarm?
Pursue thy journey through the waste,
Not foot of mine shall work thee harm.

Who knows what errand grave thou hast,
"Small family,"—that have not dined?
Lodged under pebble, there they fast,
Till head of house have raised the wind!

Man's bread lies 'mong the feet of men;
For cark and moil sufficient cause!
Who cannot sow would reap;—and then
In Beetledom are no Poor-Laws.

And if thy Wife and thou agree
But ill, as like when short of victual,
I sware, the Public Sympathy
Thy fortune meriteth, poor Beetle.

Alas, and I should do thee skaith,
To realms of Night with heeltap send!
Who judg'd thee worthy pains of Death?—
On Earth, save me, without a Friend!

Pass on, poor Beetle, venerable
Art thou, were wonders ne'er so rife;
Thou hast what Bel to Tower of Babel
Not gave: the chief of wonders,—Life.

Also of 'ancient family,'
Though small in size, of feature dark!
What Debrett's Peer surpasseth thee?
Thy Ancestor was in Noah's Ark.

I.—TO-DAY.

SO here hath been dawning
Another blue Day:
Think wilt thou let it
Slip useless away.

Out of Eternity
This new Day is born;
Into Eternity,
At night, will return.

Behold it aforetime
No eye ever did:
So soon it forever
From all eyes is hid.

Here hath been dawning
Another blue Day:
Think wilt thou let it
Slip useless away.

VII.—FORTUNA.

THE wind blows east, the wind blows west,
And the frost falls and the rain:
A weary heart went thankful to rest,
And must rise to toil again, 'gain,
And must rise to toil again.

The wind blows east, the wind blows west,
And there comes good luck and bad;
The thriftiest man is the cheerfullest;
'Tis a thriftless thing to be sad, sad,
'Tis a thriftless thing to be sad.

The wind blows east, the wind blows west;
Ye shall know a tree by its fruit:
This world, they say, is worst to the best;—
But as dastard as evil to boot, boot,
But as dastard as evil to boot.

The wind blows east, the wind blows west;
What skills it to mourn or to talk?
A journey I have, and far ere I rest;
I must bundle my wallets and walk, walk,
I must bundle my wallets and walk.

The wind does blow as it lists alway;
Canst thou change this world to thy mind?
The world will wander its own wise way;
I also will wander mine, mine,
I also will wander mine.

Hartley Coleridge.

1796—1849.

"For I was rear'd
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
But thou, my babe! shalt wander like a breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
Of ancient mountains, and beneath the clouds,
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
And mountain crags; so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in Himself."

S. T. Coleridge.

Hartley Coleridge, to whom the above singularly prophetic lines refer, was the eldest son of the poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and was born at Clevedon, near Bristol, September 19th, 1796. His grandfather, the Rev. John Coleridge, was the vicar of Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, and Head Master in the King's School; he is said to have been a devout, learned, and simple-hearted man, and from him his son and grandson seem to have inherited, amongst other qualities, that occasional absence of mind to which they were both at times subject. His "Miscellaneous Dissertations," published in the year 1768, were favourably received, and contained critical remarks on certain Biblical passages, disquisitions on the Proseuchæ, the Star Gods, the conversive "vau," and other subjects. He was the

father of thirteen children, of whom Samuel Taylor was the youngest.

The poet Coleridge was, as we all know, hardly less gifted as a thinker and metaphysician than he was as a poet, and it is not therefore surprising to find that he chose for his eldest son the name of the illustrious metaphysician, David Hartley, whose works he had studied and admired. The christening of Hartley did not, however, take place until he was about six years of age, when the whole family, consisting of Hartley, his brother Derwent, and sister Sara, were brought to the font together in the parish church of Crosthwaite, near Keswick. He appears to have been a very winsome child, and his father in a letter dated November 1st, 1796, with questionable modesty observes: "He is stout, healthy, and handsome,—the very miniature of me." In childhood, as indeed throughout the whole of his life, he was in very truth "Nature's playmate," and we are told that coming in one day with the mark of a horse's hoof on his pinafore, it was found, on inquiry, that he had been pulling hairs out of a horse's tail, and the horse had pushed him back, as his father firmly believed, with intentional forbearance.

In the autumn of the year 1800 the family removed to Greta Hall, Keswick (which afterwards became the residence of Robert Southey), and a little later, being taken on a visit to Coleorton, the seat of Sir George Beaumont, Hartley made the acquaintance of the poet Wordsworth, who wrote the following exquisite lines respecting him:—

"O thou! whose fancies from afar are brought;
Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
And fittest to unutterable thought

The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol;
Thou faery Voyager! that dost float
In such clear water, that thy boat
May rather seem
To brood on air than on an earthly stream;
Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
Where earth and heaven do make one imagery;
O blessed vision! happy Child!
That art so exquisitely wild,
I think of thee with many fears
For what may be thy lot in future years."

* * * * * *

It was during this visit to Coleorton that Hartley's portrait was painted by Sir David Wilkie, and the large dreamy eyes and meditative expression, as depicted therein, serve to confirm the child's quaint observation that he was always "thinking of his thoughts!" A characteristic story respecting this period of his childhood is furnished from a diary kept by Henry Crabb Robinson, in which it is stated that, when asked a question about himself being called Hartley, he replied, "Which Hartley? There's a deal of Hartleys,—there's Picture-Hartley, and Shadow-Hartley, and there's Echo-Hartley, and there's Catch-me-fast-Hartley;" at the same time seizing his own arm with the other hand very eagerly. It was apparently about this date that he first invented the wonderful country, Ejuxria,—an imaginary island-continent, a visionary realm, to which he transported himself on the dream-wings of Fancy from time to time, not only during his childhood, but even in later years. "Derwent," he would say to his brother, "I have had letters and papers from Ejuxria,"—and then followed a budget of news, with appropriate reflections on the affairs, customs,

history, politics, etc., of that wonderful land, that veritable "faery-land" in which he ever loved to wander. This would seem to indicate that the poet's creative faculty was already putting forth its irrepressible power, and developing itself in the early buds and untutored blossom of childhood;—as also does the quaint observation which he is said to have made when he was first taken to London, being then a child in arms, and saw the lamps of the great city: "Oh! now," he exclaimed, "I know what the stars are—they are lamps that have been good upon earth, and have gone up into heaven."

About one mile from Ambleside, is a lovely hamlet with the unlovely name of Clappersgate, which overlooks the Brathay Valley wherein resided the poet, Charles Lloyd. Here Hartley passed his schooldays, under the care of the Rev. John Dawes, but, as has been remarked, it was in the library at Allan Bank, in the Vale of Grasmere, where Wordsworth then lived, that he carried on his English studies. He also spent many happy hours with Professor Wilson, at Elleray, on the banks of Windermere, who, together with Wordsworth, Southey, and De Quincey, was destined to be his friend through life.

In 1814 he went up to Oxford, and became a scholar at Merton College; and now commenced a less happy period of his life. His first disappointment, and it was one with very serious results, arose from his failing to win the Newdigate Prize for English Verse. The subject fixed for the poem in 1815 was the "Horses of Lysippus," and the prize was awarded to Mr. (afterwards Sir Alexander) MacDonnell, who was undoubtedly an able writer of verse and two years older than Hartley. After com-

paring the two poems I must admit that the judges were right, and that MacDonnell's composition deservedly obtained the prize. "This was almost the only occasion in my life," Hartley writes, "wherein I was keenly disappointed, for it was the only one upon which I felt any confident hope." Unfortunately he sought relief from his despondency in the stimulus of wine, and so commenced a habit of occasional intemperance which compelled him to relinquish the Fellowship at Oriel which he afterwards obtained.

On leaving Oxford he resided awhile in London, writing for the *London Magazine*, and then went to Ambleside and opened a school, which, however, proved a failure. From Ambleside he removed to Grasmere, where he lived at a house, now called Rose Cottage, situate at Town End, about one hundred yards from Dove Cottage, where Wordsworth resided before he went to Allan Bank, and where some of his best poems were composed. A few years later Hartley took up his residence at Nab Cottage, on the banks of Rydal Water, and there he remained during the rest of his life. For some twenty or more years he was to be met wandering about the shores of Grasmere and Rydal, well-known to the country-folk as "Li'le Hartley o' the Nab," and a welcome visitor at all their cottages.

The metrical compositions of Hartley Coleridge may properly be divided into two parts, the one consisting of sonnets, and the other of lyric and idyllic verse. Of the latter it may be stated at once that it is not of the highest order, and if it stood alone would probably soon be forgotten. His longest poem, "Leonard and Susan," was originally

published in *Blackwood's Magazine*. It is a graceful, simple story, told in pleasant verse, but wanting that marked originality of thought and expression without which the fame of a poem is seldom of long duration. His "Prometheus," a dramatic fragment, although regarded by S. T. Coleridge as "full of promise," is poor indeed when compared with such poems as Keats's "Hyperion," or Shelley's "Alastor." And as regards the shorter lyrical poems which he composed, it must be admitted that, with one or two exceptions, they are somewhat thin and vapid. They indicate, it is true, considerable facility in writing, and much genial sympathy and kindliness of heart, but they also discover, on the other hand, a feeble intellectual grip, and a defective insight into the facts and realities of the world in which we live. Very different, however, must be our criticism respecting his sonnets. The greatest poets—Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Keats, and Wordsworth—have for the most part, written the finest sonnets; Hartley Coleridge was not a great poet, but, as his brother Derwent justly observed, his sonnets will sustain comparison with those by Wordsworth. "Taken as single compositions, they are not less graceful, or less fraught with meaning; they possess a softer if not a deeper pathos, they have at least as easy a flow and as perfect an arrangement." The soul-animating sonnets of Milton are more solemn and grand, and those of Keats and Wordsworth may reach a higher level of poetic imagination, yet the fact must be recorded that after Shakespeare our sweetest English sonneteer is Hartley Coleridge, and the sweetest English sonnet the one beginning—

"When we were idlers with the loitering rills."

Very excellent, also, are those addressed respectively "To a Deaf and Dumb little Girl," and "To a Lofty Beauty from her Poor Kinsman;" and there are about twenty other sonnets composed by Hartley Coleridge which may be classed as equally fine. An anonymous writer (who, however, appears to have been personally acquainted with the poet) has observed that in mere music and rhythm Hartley's sonnets often come nearer to Shakespeare's than those of any modern poet, not excepting Wordsworth, and he adds that the English language contains few more exquisite sonnets than that on the lack of great poets in this age. The following is the sonnet referred to:—

"Whither is gone the wisdom and the power
That ancient sages scatter'd with the notes
Of thought-suggesting lyres? The music floats
In the void air; e'en at this breathing hour,
In every cell and every blooming bower
The sweetness of old lays is hovering still:
But the strong soul, the self-constraining will,
The rugged root that bare the winsome flower
Is weak and wither'd. Were we like the Fays
That sweetly nestle in the fox-glove bells,
Or lurk and murmur in the rose-lipp'd shells
Which Neptune to the earth for quit-rent pays,
Then might our pretty modern Philomels
Sustain our spirits with their roundelays."

The names of Wordsworth and Hartley Coleridge must always be associated with each other. From the little gate at the end of the garden at Rydal Mount (where it will be remembered Emerson once parted with the author of the "Excursion" after paying him a friendly visit), it is but a walk of a few hundred yards across the fields to Nab Cottage, and

there is little doubt that the two poets saw each other almost daily during the last twenty years of their lives. It is not improbable that Hartley on many occasions acted as an able and valuable critic and adviser to Wordsworth, and indeed the country-folk of the neighbourhood are said to affirm that "Hartley helped him a deal, and did the best part of his poems for him!" This would be excellent, if it were not for the fact that the *best* part of Wordsworth's poems was written soon after Hartley was born, when Wordsworth was living at Town End. But there may possibly have been some small foundation for this belief amongst the peasantry as regards the later poems, written at Rydal Mount, which were, as we all know, not very valuable compositions.

In January, 1849, Hartley Coleridge died, and was buried in Grasmere churchyard, in the spot selected for his grave by Wordsworth. And now, close by, lie the remains of the more illustrious poet,—his friend through life, his near and dear companion in death. "They lie in the south-east angle of the churchyard, not far from a group of trees, with the little beck (the Rotha), that feeds the lake with its clear waters murmuring by their side. Around them are the quiet mountains."

SAMUEL WADDINGTON.

POEMS.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

I.—SHE WAS A QUEEN.

SHE was a queen of noble Nature's crowning,
A smile of hers was like an act of grace;
She had no winsome looks, no pretty frowning,
Like daily beauties of the vulgar race:
But if she smiled, a light was on her face,
A clear, cool kindliness, a lunar beam
Of peaceful radiance, silvering o'er the stream
Of human thought with unabiding glory;
Not quite a waking truth, not quite a dream,
A visitation, bright and transitory.

But she is changed,—hath felt the touch of sorrow,
No love hath she, no understanding friend;
Oh grief! when heaven is forced of earth to borrow
What the poor niggard earth has not to lend;
But when the stalk is snapt, the rose must bend.
The tallest flower that skyward rears its head
Grows from the common ground, and there must shed
Its delicate petals. Cruel fate, too surely,
That they should find so base a bridal bed,
Who lived in virgin pride, so sweet and purely.

She had a brother, and a tender father,
And she was loved, but not as others are
From whom we ask return of love,—but rather
As one might love a dream; a phantom-fair
Of something exquisitely strange and rare,

Which all were glad to look on, men and maids,
Yet no one claim'd—as oft, in dewy glades
The peering primrose, like a sudden gladness,
Gleams on the soul, yet unregarded fades;—
The joys is ours, but all its own the sadness.

'Tis vain to say—her worst of grief is only
The common lot, which all the world have known
To her 'tis more, because her heart is lonely,
And yet she hath no strength to stand alone,—
Once she had playmates, fancies of her own,
And she did love them. They are past away
As Fairies vanish at the break of day;
And like a spectre of an age departed,
Or unsphered Angel woefully astray,
She glides along—the solitary hearted.

II.—SUMMER RAIN.

THICK lay the dust, uncomfortably white,
In glaring mimicry of Arab sand.
The woods and mountains slept in hazy light;
The meadows look'd athirst and tawny tann'd;
The little rills had left their channels bare,
With scarce a pool to witness what they were;
And the shrunk river gleam'd 'mid oozy stones,
That stared like any famish'd giant's bones.

Sudden the hills grew black, and hot as stove
The air beneath; it was a toil to be.
There was a growling as of angry Jove,
Provoked by Juno's prying jealousy—
A flash—a crash—the firmament was split,
And down it came in drops—the smallest fit
To drown a bee in fox-glove bell conceal'd;
Joy fill'd the brook, and comfort cheer'd the field.

III.—ADDRESS TO CERTAIN GOLD FISHES.

RESTLESS forms of living light
Quivering on your lucid wings,
Cheating still the curious sight
With a thousand shadowings ;—
Various as the tints of even,
Gorgeous as the hues of heaven,
Reflected on your native streams
In flitting, flashing, billowy gleams !

Harmless warriors, clad in mail
Of silver breastplate, golden scale;—
Mail of Nature's own bestowing,
With peaceful radiance mildly glowing,—
Fleet are ye, as fleetest galley
Or pirate rover sent from Sallee;
Keener than the Tartar's arrow,
Sport ye in your sea so narrow.

Was the sun himself your sire ?
Were ye born of vital fire ?
Or of the shade of golden flowers,
Such as we fetch from eastern bowers,
To mock this murky clime of ours ?
Upwards, downwards, now ye glance,
Weaving many a mazy dance;
Seeming still to grow in size
When ye would elude our eyes.
Pretty creatures ! we might deem
Ye were happy as ye seem,—
As gay, as gamesome, and as blithe,
As light, as loving, and as lithe,
As gladly earnest in your play,
As when ye gleam'd in far Cathay

And yet, since on this hapless earth
There's small sincerity in mirth,
And laughter oft is but an art
To drown the outcry of the heart;
It may be, that your ceaseless gambols,
Your wheelings, dartings, divings, rambles,
Your restless roving round and round
The circuit of your crystal bound,—
Is but the task of weary pain,
An endless labour, dull and vain;
And while your forms are gaily shining
Your little lives are inly pining!
Nay! but still I fain would dream
That ye are happy as ye seem,
Deck'd in Oriental pride,
By homely British fire-side.

IV.—SONG.

SHE is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be,
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smil'd on me;
Oh! then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light.

But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply,
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye:
Her very frowns are fairer far,
Than smiles of other maidens are.

SONNETS.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

I.—DEDICATORY SONNET TO S. T. COLERIDGE.

LEEDS, *January* 1833.

FATHER, and Bard revered! to whom I owe,
Whate'er it be, my little art of numbers,
Thou, in thy night-watch o'er my cradled slumbers,
Didst meditate the verse that lives to shew
(And long shall live, when we alike are low),
Thy prayer how ardent, and thy hope how strong,
That I should learn of Nature's self the song,
The lore which none but Nature's pupils know.
The prayer was heard: I "wander'd like a breeze,"
By mountain brooks and solitary meres,
And gather'd there the shapes and phantasies
Which, mixt with passions of my sadder years,
Compose this book. If good therein there be,
That good, my sire, I dedicate to thee.

II.—TO A FRIEND.

WHEN we were idlers with the loitering rills,
The need of human love we little noted:
Our love was nature; and the peace that floated
On the white mist, and dwelt upon the hills,
To sweet accord subdued our wayward wills:
One soul was ours, one mind, one heart devoted,
That, wisely doating, ask'd not why it doated,
And ours the unknown joy, which knowing kills.
But now I find, how dear thou wert to me;
That man is more than half of nature's treasure,
Of that fair beauty which no eye can see,
Of that sweet music which no ear can measure;
And now the streams may sing for others' pleasure,
The hills sleep on in their eternity.

III.—TO THE SAME.

WE parted on the mountains, as two streams
From one clear spring pursue their several ways;
And thy fleet course hath been through many a maze
In foreign lands, where silvery Padus gleams
To that delicious sky, whose glowing beams
Brighten'd the tresses that old Poets praise;
Where Petrarch's patient love, and artful lays,
And Ariosto's song of many themes,
Moved the soft air. But I, a lazy brook,
As close pent up within my native dell,
Have crept along from nook to shady nook,
Where flow'rets blow, and whispering Naiads dwell.
Yet now we meet, that parted were so wide,
O'er rough and smooth to travel side by side.

IV.—LONG TIME A CHILD.

LONG time a child, and still a child, when years
Had painted manhood on my cheek, was I,—
For yet I lived like one not born to die;
A thriftless prodigal of smiles and tears,
No hope I needed, and I knew no fears.
But sleep, though sweet, is only sleep, and waking,
I waked to sleep no more, at once o'ertaking
The vanguard of my age, with all arrears
Of duty on my back. Nor child, nor man,
Nor youth, nor sage, I find my head is grey,
For I have lost the race I never ran:
A rathe December blights my lagging May;
And still I am a child, tho' I be old,
Time is my debtor for my years untold.

V.—THE SENSE OF HEARING.

WHAT was't awaken'd first the untried ear
Of that sole man who was all human kind ?
Was it the gladsome welcome of the wind,
Stirring the leaves that never yet were sere ?
The four mellifluous streams which flow'd so near,
Their lulling murmurs all in one combined ?
The note of bird unnamed ? The startled hind
Bursting the brake—in wonder, not in fear,
Of her new lord ? Or did the holy ground
Send forth mysterious melody to greet
The gracious pressure of immaculate feet ?
Did viewless seraphs rustle all around,
Making sweet music out of air as sweet ?
Or his own voice awake him with its sound ?

VI.—TO A DEAF AND DUMB LITTLE GIRL.

LIKE a loose island on the wide expanse,
Unconscious floating on the fickle sea,
Herself her all, she lives in privacy ;
Her waking life as lonely as a trance,
Doom'd to behold the universal dance,
And never hear the music which expounds
The solemn step, coy slide, the merry bounds,
The vague, mute language of the countenance.
In vain for her I smooth my antic rhyme ;
She cannot hear it ; all her little being
Concentered in her solitary seeing—
What can she know of beaut[eous] or sublime?
And yet methinks she looks so calm and good,
God must be with her in her solitude.

VII.—TO A LOFTY BEAUTY, FROM HER POOR KINSMAN.

FAIR maid, had I not heard thy baby cries,
Nor seen thy girlish, sweet vicissitude,
Thy mazy motions, striving to elude,
Yet wooing still a parent's watchful eyes,
Thy humours, many as the opal's dyes,
And lovely all;—methinks thy scornful mood,
And bearing high of stately womanhood,—
Thy brow, where Beauty sits to tyrannise
O'er humble love, had made me sadly fear thee;
For never sure was seen a royal bride,
Whose gentleness gave grace to so much pride—
My very thoughts would tremble to be near thee:
But when I see thee at thy father's side,
Old times unqueen thee, and old loves endear thee.

VIII.—HOMER.

FAR from all measured space, yet clear and plain
As sun at noon, "a mighty orb of song"
Illumes extremest Heaven. Beyond the throng
Of lesser stars, that rise, and wax, and wane,
The transient rulers of the fickle main,
One steadfast light gleams through the dark, and long,
And narrowing aisle of memory. How strong,
How fortified with all the numerous train
Of human truths, Great Poet of thy kind,
Wert thou, whose verse, capacious as the sea,
And various as the voices of the wind,
Swell'd with the gladness of the battle's glee—
And yet could glorify infirmity,
When Priam wept, or shame-struck Helen pined.

IX.—NOVEMBER.

THE mellow year is hasting to its close;
The little birds have almost sung their last,
Their small notes twitter in the dreary blast—
That shrill-piped harbinger of early snows;
The patient beauty of the scentless rose,
Oft with the Morn's hoar crystal quaintly glass'd,
Hangs, a pale mourner for the summer past,
And makes a little summer where it grows:
In the chill sunbeam of the faint brief day
The dusky waters shudder as they shine,
The russet leaves obstruct the straggling way
Of oozy brooks, which no deep banks define,
And the gaunt woods, in ragged, scant array
Wrap their old limbs with sombre ivy twine.

X.—NIGHT.

THE crackling embers on the hearth are dead;
The indoor note of industry is still;
The latch is fast; upon the window sill
The small birds wait not for their daily bread;
The voiceless flowers—how quietly they shed
Their nightly odours;—and the household rill
Murmurs continuous dulcet sounds that fill
The vacant expectation, and the dread
Of listening night. And haply now she sleeps
For all the garrulous noises of the air
Are hush'd in peace; the soft dew silent weeps
Like hopeless lovers for a maid so fair:—
Oh! that I were the happy dream that creeps
To her soft heart, to find my image there.

XI.—PRAYER.

THERE is an awful quiet in the air,
And the sad earth, with moist imploring eye,
Looks wide and wakeful at the pondering sky,
Like Patience slow subsiding to Despair.
But see, the blue smoke, as a voiceless prayer,
Sole witness of a secret sacrifice,
Unfolds its tardy wreaths, and multiplies
Its soft chameleon breathings in the rare
Capacious ether,—so it fades away,
And nought is seen beneath the pendent blue,
The undistinguishable waste of day.
So have I dream'd!—oh, may the dream be true! —
That praying souls are purged from mortal hue,
And grow as pure as He to whom they pray.

XII.—A LOVELY MORN.

MAY, 1840.

A LOVELY morn, so still, so very still,
It hardly seems a growing day of Spring,
Though all the odorous buds are blossoming,
And the small matin birds were glad and shrill
Some hours ago; but now the woodland rill
Murmurs along, the only vocal thing,
Save when the wee wren flits with stealthy wing,
And cons by fits and bits her evening trill.
Lovers might sit on such a morn as this
An hour together, looking at the sky,
Nor dare to break the silence with a kiss,
Long listening for the signal of a sigh;
And the sweet Nun, diffused in voiceless prayer,
Feel her own soul through all the brooding air.

George Darley.

1795—1846.

GEORGE DARLEY was born in Dublin, in 1795, and was the son of Arthur Darley, a man of independent means. According to the *College Entrance Book*, he entered Trinity College, Dublin, in 1815, but did not take his B.A. degree until 1820. Arrived in London about 1822, he began his literary career by the publication of "The Errors of Ecstasie and other Pieces." "The Errors of Ecstasie" consists of a dialogue between a Mystic and the Moon, and is chiefly interesting as an indication of the poet's own habit of morbid introspection and condition of overwrought sensibility. It contains some fine passages, but it lacks the elements of popular interest, and failed to bring him early fame. The "Other Pieces" which accompanied it, despite certain felicities of style, gave little promise of future excellence.

Soon after the publication of his first poems, Darley became a regular contributor to the *London Magazine*, then in the heyday of its fame, and under the pseudonym of "John Lacy," wrote for it monthly a series of critical papers on the "Dramatists of the Day." During the progress of these critiques it was his pleasant fortune to meet with the earliest published drama of Beddoes, *The Bride's Tragedy*, and to be the first to award it public praise. During his connection with the *London Magazine* Darley contributed to it many articles in prose and verse, including "Olympian Revels," and his best story,

"Lilian of the Vale," which contained the song "I've been roaming," afterwards so popular.

In 1826, under the name of "Guy Penseval," Darley issued a collection of tales, called "The Labours of Idleness, or Seven Nights' Entertainment"—a volume in which "Lilian" reappeared with the well-known song, and in which occur other lyrics reproduced in these pages. Illustrative of the simple tender pathos of some of these lyrics, the following Blake-like inscription for a robin's grave, entitled "Robin's Cross," may be quoted:—

"A little cross
To tell my loss;
A little bed
To rest my head;
A little tear is all I crave
Upon my very little grave.

I strew thy bed,
Who loved thy lays;
The tear I shed,
The cross I raise,
With nothing more upon it than—
Here lies the little friend of man."

In 1827, under his own name, he published a lyrical drama, entitled "Sylvia, or the May Queen." "Sylvia," to quote Miss Mitford, is "something between *The Faithful Shepherdess* and *The Midsummer Night's Dream*." Both as a poem and a story it is a charming production. Here and there it is disfigured by commonplaceness, and occasionally the bathos is so extraordinary, that the poet seems jesting with his readers. Darley himself said, "The grotesque parts offend generally against good taste," but pleaded that the work "was written in the gasping times of laborious scientific engagements." Notwithstanding

these trivialities there is so much exquisite fancy, real poetry, true pathos, and weird imagination in the poem that it deserves to be rescued from the obscurity in which it has so long and so unaccountably lingered. That it should have interested Coleridge and a whole generation of poets is not surprising, whilst Mrs. Browning's characterisation of it as "a beautiful, tuneful pastoral" is not over praise. The hero and heroine were evidently suggested by Ferdinand and Miranda of *The Tempest*, and reminiscences of Shakespeare's lighter moods are frequent and palpable. Several very beautiful lyrics are scattered about the drama—lyrics which have the merit of being poetic as well as musical. Many of the descriptive passages are highly imaginative, and should be sufficient in themselves to save their author's name from oblivion.

After the publication of "Sylvia" Darley seems for a long time to have abandoned poetry. He travelled in Italy and other lands, writing home letters on art. Eventually he joined the staff of the *Athenæum*, and became somewhat unpleasantly known to many authors as a severe and caustic critic. A great drawback to his entrance into society was his stammering, which he called his "mask:" it was painful to himself and to his auditors, and caused him to remain aloof at times when congenial company was obtainable.

In 1839 George Darley again appeared as a poet. In that year he privately circulated a remarkable poem entitled "Nepenthe." It contains passages of glowing passion and gleaming fancy, and is replete with an ultra-Celtic—with an Oriental—superabundance of imagery. In a letter to H. F. Chorley the

poet describes the general object or *mythos of* the poem to be "to show the folly of discontent with the natural tone of human life." "Canto I.," he says, "attempts to paint the ill-effects of over-joy; Canto II., those of excessive melancholy. Part of the latter object remains to be worked out in Canto III., which should likewise show . . . that contentment with the mingled cup of humanity is the true 'Nepenthe.'"

With the production of "Nepenthe" Darley's poetic powers appear to have culminated. "Thomas à Becket," published in 1840, is not up to the standard of his previous works. Like all Darley's longer productions, it is unequal. The few really poetic passages refer to the beauties of nature: such are the lines,—

> "The mountain-shaded moors where nothing stirs
> Save the wild daffodil or crispèd fern,
> Or long lithe broom that flows with every breeze,
> Or thistlebeard scarce wafted on, . . .
> The murmuring branches and the flowers that kiss
> Each other's ear in talk;"—

or, again, this paraphrase of Virgil,—

> "This neighbour hedge of willow flowers
> Still pasturing Hyblæan bees, shall oft
> With their light murmur lure thee to repose!
> Here shall the woodman sing unto the winds
> Beneath the lofty rock; nor shall thy care
> The deep-voiced doves, nor shall the turtle cease
> From the aërial elm-tree to complain."

In the following year Darley issued another dramatic work, founded on certain incidents in the life of "Ethelstan, King of Wessex." Superior to 'à Becket" in poetic value, and containing some noteworthy imitations of Saxon and Danish songs

and ballads, this drama displays the same irregularities which characterise even the best of Darley's longer performances. There is too much straining after effect to please an impartial reader: for the spectator, should the drama ever have a chance of representation, a greater amount of interest might be excited.

During 1840 Darley edited an edition of Beaumont and Fletcher's works, and in the same year contributed "The Harvest Home," a pastoral poem, to Finden's *Tableaux*, a periodical then edited by Miss Mitford. It is as a lyrist, and as a laureate of fairyland that Darley is most successful. His best songs sing themselves with all the spontaneity of bird songs, and his pictures of Fairy Life, as in "Fairy Revels," p. 164, are characterised by the wealth of fancy and delicacy of touch that evince a mastery over such themes.

Darley died of decline on November 23rd, 1846, and, according to Miss Mitford, his deathbed was as lonely as his life had been. The *Athenæum*, in noticing his death, thus refers to the qualities of his poetic work:—"That the attention which Mr. Darley's poems commanded has been unequal to their merits, every true lover of poetry to whom they are familiar will feel: for a true lover, as we understand the word, will allow for an almost bewildering exuberance of fancies, the offspring of self-indulgent loneliness—for occasional singularities of humour and language, as natural to one who had 'commerced' so intimately with ancient literature,—and for a knowledge of passion and insight into character, greater than such experience of life as leads the imaginative creator to prefer what is probable for

his subjects and symmetrical in their elaboration. These peculiarities granted,—there remain excursiveness of invention, vigour of expression, and delicious sweetness of versification—rare in any day,—in right of which, the name of George Darley ought to stand high among the poets of his time. As a critic, it would be difficult to rate him too highly. . . . Intolerant of pretension, disdainful of mercenary ambition, and indignant at sluggishness or conceit, —he will be often referred to, by the sincere and generous spirits of literature and art, as one whose love of truth was equalled by his perfect preparation for every task that he undertook; and whose praise was worth having—not because it was rarely given, but because it was never withheld save upon good grounds."

Among the MS. poems of George Darley selected by his relatives, R. and M. J. Livingstone, and printed for private circulation in 1890, is a "Lament," the last stanza of which, with its pathetic and prophetic interest, may well close this brief record of his career:—

"Alive, I would be loved of *one*,
I would be wept when I am gone;
Methinks a tear from Beauty's eye
Would make me even wish to die—
To know what I have never known!
But on this pallid cheek, a ray
Of kindness ne'er was cast away,
And as I lived most broken-hearted,
So shall I die, all—all deserted,
Without one sigh—except my own!"

JOHN H. INGRAM.

THE LABOURS OF IDLENESS.

1826.

GEORGE DARLEY.

I.—WHEREFORE, UNLAURELLED BOY.

(FROM "THE ENCHANTED LYRE.")

WHEREFORE, unlaurelled Boy,
Whom the contemptuous Muse will not inspire
With a sad kind of joy,
Still sing'st thou to thy solitary lyre?

The melancholy winds
Pour through unnumber'd reeds their idle woes,
And every Naiad finds
A stream to weep her sorrow as it flows.

Her sighs unto the air
The wood-maid's native oak doth broadly tell,
And Echo's fond despair
Intelligible rocks re-syllable.

Wherefore then should not I,
Albeit no haughty Muse my breast inspire,
Fated of grief to die,
Impart it to a solitary lyre?

II.—THE WILD BEE'S TALE.

(FROM "THE ENCHANTED LYRE.")

WHEN the sun steps from the billow
On the steep and stairless sky,
"Up!" I say, and quit my pillow,
"Bed, for many an hour, good-bye!

Swiftly to the East I turn me,
Where the world's great lustre beams,
Warm to bathe, but not to burn me,
In its radiant fount of streams.

Then unto the glittering valley,
Where Aurora strews her pearls,
With my favourite flowers to dally,
Jewelled all, like princely girls!

There I hum amid the bushes,
Eating honey, as it grows,
Off the cheek of maiden blushes,
And the red lip of the rose.

In the ear of every flower
Buzzing many a secret thing,
Every bright belle of the bower
Thinks it is for her I sing.

But the valley and the river,
That go with me as I go,
Know me for a grand deceiver;
All my pretty pranks they know.

How I lull'd a rose with humming
Gentle ditties in her ear,
Then into her bosom coming,
Rifled all the treasure there.

How I kiss'd a pair of sisters
Hanging from one parent tree,
Whilst each bud-mouth, as I kist her's,
Call'd me—Her own little bee!

Now my Flower-gentle, sighing
To so wild a lover true,

Tells me she is just a-dying,—
So I must go kiss her too.

Down the Honeysuckle bending,
As I light upon her crest,
And her silken tucker rending,
Creep I bold into her breast.

There entranced, but scarcely sleeping,
For one odorous while I lie;
But for all her woe and weeping,
In a moment out I fly.

Golden-chain, with all her tresses,
Cannot bind me for an hour;
Soon I break her amorous jesses,
And desert the drooping flower.

They may talk of happy Heaven,
Of another World of Bliss;
Were I choice and freedom given,
I would ask no world but this.

Have they lawns so wide and sunny?
Have they such sweet valleys there?
Are their fields so full of honey?—
What care I for fields of air!

Give me Earth's rich sun and flowers,
Give me Earth's green fields and groves;
Let him fly to Eden's bowers,
He who such cold bowers loves.

O er the broom and furze and heather,
That betuft the mountain side,
In the sweet sun-shiny weather,
Let me here for ever glide.

Let me o'er the woodland wander,
On my wild bassooning wing,
Let me, as the streams meander,
Murmur to their murmuring.

I can dream of nothing sweeter
Under or above the moon;
Tell me any thing that's better,
And I'll change my song as soon.

But if Heaven must be,—I pr'ythee,
God of woodlands! grant my prayer—
Let me bring my woodland with me,
Or find such another there!

III.—I'VE BEEN ROAMING.

(FROM "LILIAN OF THE VALE.")

I'VE been roaming! I've been roaming!
Where the meadow dew is sweet,
And like a queen I'm coming
With its pearls upon my feet.

I've been roaming! I've been roaming!
O'er red rose and lily fair,
And like a sylph I'm coming
With their blossoms in my hair.

I've been roaming! I've been roaming!
Where the honeysuckle creeps,
And like a bee I'm coming
With its kisses on my lips.

I've been roaming! I've been roaming!
Over hill and over plain,
And like a bird I'm coming
To my bower back again!

SYLVIA; OR, THE MAY QUEEN.

A LYRICAL DRAMA.

1827.

GEORGE DARLEY.

I.

MAY DAY.

(FROM ACT III., SCENE II.)

Peasants assembled.

CHORUS.

O MAY, thou art a merry time,
  Sing hi ! the hawthorn pink and pale !
When hedge-pipes they begin to chime,
  And summer-flowers to sow the dale.

When lasses and their lovers meet
  Beneath the early village-thorn,
And to the sound of tabor sweet
  Bid welcome to the Maying-morn !

O May, thou art a merry time,
  Sing hi ! the hawthorn pink and pale !
When hedge-pipes they begin to chime,
  And summer-flowers to sow the dale.

When grey-beards and their gossips come
  With crutch in hand our sports to see,
And both go tottering, tattling home,
  Topful of wine as well as glee !

O May, thou art a merry time,
  Sing hi ! the hawthorn pink and pale !
When hedge-pipes they begin to chime,
  And summer-flowers to sow the dale.

But Youth was aye the time for bliss,
So taste it, Shepherds! while ye may:
For who can tell that joy like this
Will come another holiday?

O May, thou art a merry time,
Sing hi! the hawthorn pink and pale!
When hedge-pipes they begin to chime,
And summer-flowers to sow the dale.

[*The* Girls *proceed to draw lots to decide who shall be* May Queen, *after which*—

Enter OSME *above, playin on a lyre.*

Stephania.

Hark! hark! O hark! what measures play
So sweet! so clear! yet far away!

Roselle.

Whence is the music? who can say?

Jacintha.

'Tis like the crystal sound of wells,
Betrampled by the sparkling rain!

Stephania.

Or dew-drops fal'n on silver bells
That tingle o'er and o'er again!

1st Girl. 'Tis in the air!

2nd Girl. 'Tis under ground!

3rd Girl. 'Tis every where!

4th Girl. The magic sound!

All. Hush! O hush! and let us hear:
'Tis too beautiful to fear.

OSME *sings and plays.*

Hither! hither!
O come hither!
Lads and lasses come and see!

Trip it neatly,
Foot it featly,
O'er the grassy turf to me!

Here are bowers
Hung with flowers,
Richly curtain'd halls for you!
Meads for rovers,
Shades for lovers,
Violet beds, and pillows too!

Purple heather
You may gather
Sandal-deep in seas of bloom!
Pale-faced lily,
Proud Sweet-Willy,
Gorgeous rose, and golden broom!

Odorous blossoms
For sweet bosoms,
Garlands green to bind the hair;
Crowns and kirtles
Weft of myrtles,
Youth may choose, and Beauty wear!

Brightsome glasses
For bright faces
Shine in ev'ry rill that flows;
Every minute
You look in it
Still more bright your beauty grows!

Banks for sleeping,
Nooks for peeping,
Glades for dancing, smooth and fine!

Fruits delicious
For who wishes,
Nectar, dew, and honey-wine!

Hither! hither!
O come hither!
Lads and lasses come and see!
Trip it neatly,
Foot it featly,
O'er the grassy turf to me!

[*Exeunt* Peasants *led by the music.*

II.

SERENADE.

(FROM ACT IV., SCENE I.)

ROMANZO *sings.*

AWAKE thee, my Lady-love!
Wake thee, and rise!
The sun through the bower peeps
Into thine eyes!

Behold how the early lark
Springs from the corn!
Hark, hark how the flower-bird
Winds her wee horn!

The swallow's glad shriek is heard
All through the air!
The stock-dove is murmuring
Loud as she dare!

Apollo's wing'd bugleman
Cannot contain,
But peals his loud trumpet-call
Once and again!

Then wake thee, my Lady-love,
Bird of my bower!
The sweetest and sleepiest
Bird at this hour!

III.

DIRGE.

(FROM ACT IV., SCENE III.)

WAIL! wail ye o'er the dead!
Wail! wail ye o'er her!
Youth's ta'en, and Beauty's fled,
O then deplore her!

Strew! strew ye, Maidens! strew
Sweet flowers and fairest!
Pale rose, and pansy blue,
Lily the rarest!

Wail! wail ye o'er the dead!
Wail! wail ye o'er her!
Youth's ta'en, and Beauty's fled,
O then deplore her!

Lay, lay her gently down
On her moss pillow,
While we our foreheads crown
With the sad willow!

Wail! wail ye o'er the dead!
Wail! wail ye o'er her!
Youth's ta'en, and Beauty's fled,
O then deplore her!

Raise, raise the song of wo,
Youths, to her honour!
Fresh leaves, and blossoms throw,
Virgins, upon her!

Wail! wail ye o'er the dead!
Wail! wail ye o'er her!
Youth's ta'en, and Beauty's fled,
O then deplore her!

Round, round the cypress bier
Where she lies sleeping,
On every turf a tear,
Let us go weeping!

Wail! wail ye o'er the dead!
Wail! wail ye o'er her!
Youth's ta'en, and Beauty's fled,
O then deplore her!

IV.

FAIRY REVELS.

(FROM ACT IV., SCENE V.)

HAVE you not oft, in the still wind,
Heard sylvan notes of a strange kind,
That rose one moment, and then fell
Swooning away like a far knell?
Listen!—that wave of perfume broke
Into sea-music, as I spoke,
Fainter than that which seems to roar
On the moon's silver-sanded shore,
When through the silence of the night
Is heard the ebb and flow of light.
O shut the eye, and ope the ear!
Do you not hear, or think you hear,
A wide hush o'er the woodland pass
Like distant waving fields of grass?—
Voices!—ho! ho!—a band is coming,
Loud as ten thousand bees a-humming,
Or ranks of little merry men
Tromboning deeply from the glen,

And now as if they changed, and rung
Their citterns small, and riband-slung,
Over their gallant shoulders hung!—
A chant! a chant! that swoons and swells
Like soft winds jangling meadow-bells;
Now brave, as when in Flora's bower
Gay Zephyr blows a trumpet-flower;
Now thrilling fine, and sharp, and clear,
Like Dian's moonbeam dulcimer;
But mixt with whoops, and infant-laughter,
Shouts following one and another after,
As on a hearty holiday
When Youth is flush, and full of May;
Small shouts, indeed, as wild bees know
Both how to hum, and hollo too.
What! is the living meadow sown
With dragon-teeth, as long agone?
Or is an army on the plains
Of this sweet clime, to fight with cranes?
Helmet and hauberk, pike and lance,
Gorget and glaive through the long grass glance,
Red-men, and blue-men, and buff-men, small,
Loud-mouth'd captains, and ensigns tall,
Grenadiers, light bobs, inch-people all,
They come! they come! with martial blore
Clearing a terrible path before;
Ruffle the high-peak'd flags i' the wind,
Mourn the long-answering trumpets behind
Telling how deep the close files are—
Make way for the stalwart sons of war!
Hurrah! the bluff-cheek'd bugle band,
Each with a loud reed in his hand!
Hurrah! the pattering company,
Each with a drum-bell at his knee!

Hurrah! the sash-capt cymbal swingers!
Hurrah! the klingle-klangle ringers!
Hurrah! hurrah! the elf-knights enter,
Each with his grasshopper at a canter!
His tough spear of a wild oat made,
His good sword of a grassy blade,
His buckram suit of shining laurel,
His shield of bark, emboss'd with coral;
See how the plumy champion keeps
His proud steed clambering on his hips,
With foaming jaw pinn'd to his breast;
Blood-rolling eyes, and arched crest;
Over his and his rider's head
A broad-sheet butterfly banner spread,
Swoops round the staff in varying form,
Flouts the soft breeze, but courts the storm.
Hard on the prancing heel of these
Come on the pigmy Thyades;
Mimics, and mummers, masqueraders,
Soft flutists, and sweet serenaders
Guitarring o'er the level green,
Or tapping the parch'd tambourine,
As swaying to, and swaying fro,
Over the stooping flow'rs they go,
That laugh within their greeny breasts
To feel such light feet on their crests,
And ev'n themselves a-dancing seem
Under the weight that presses them.
But hark! the trumpet's royal clangor
Strikes silence with the voice of anger:
Raising its broad mouth to the sun
As he would bring Apollo down,
The in-back'd, swoln, elf-winder fills
With its great roar the fairy hills;

Each woodland tuft for terror shakes,
The field-mouse in her mansion quakes,
The heart-struck wren falls through the branches,
Wide stares the earwig on his haunches,
From trees that mortals take for flowers;
Leaves of all hues fall off in showers;
So strong the blast, the voice so dread,
'Twould wake the very fairy dead!

Disputed now, half to each side,
Athwart the curled moss they glide,
Then wheel and front, to edge the scene,
Leaving a spacious glade between;
With small round eyes that twinkle bright
As moon-tears on the grass of night,
They stand spectorial, anxious all,
Like guests ranged down a dancing hall,
Some graceful pair, or more, to see
Winding along in melody.

Nor pine their little orbs in vain,
For borne in with an oaten strain,
Three petty Graces, arm-entwined,
Reel in the light curls of the wind;
Their flimsy pinions sprouted high
Lift them half-dancing as they fly;
Like a bright wheel spun on its side
The rapt three round their centre slide,
And as their circling has no end
Voice into sister voice they blend,
Weaving a labyrinthian song
Wild as the rings they trace along,
A dizzy, tipsy roundelay,—
Which I am not to sing, but they.

TRIO.

We the Sun's bright daughters be!
As our golden wings may show;
Every land, and every sea,
Echoes our sweet ho-ran ho!
Round, and round, and round we go
Singing our sweet ho-ran ho!

Over heath, and over hill,
Ho-ran, hi-ran, ho-ran ho!
At the winds unruly will,
Round, and round, and round we go.

Through the desert valley green,
Ho-ran, hi-ran, ho-ran ho!
Lonely mountains-cliffs between,
Round, and round, and round we go.

Into cave, and into wood,
Ho-ran, hi-ran, ho-ran ho!
Light as bubbles down the flood,
Round, and round, and round we go.

By the many-tassel'd bowers,
Ho-ran, hi-ran, ho-ran ho!
Nimming precious bosom-flowers,
Round, and round, and round we go.

Dimpling o'er the grassy meads,
Ho-ran, hi-ran, ho-ran ho!
Shaking gems from jewell'd heads,
Round, and round, and round we go.

After bee, and after gnat,
Ho-ran, hi-ran, ho-ran ho!
Hunting bird, and chasing bat,
Round, and round, and round we go.

Unto North, and unto South,
Ho-ran, hi-ran, ho-ran ho!
In a trice to visit both,
Round, and round, and round we go.

To the East, and to the West,
Ho-ran, hi-ran, ho-ran ho!
To the place that we love best,
Round, and round, and round we go.

1st Elve. Sweet! sweet!
2nd Elve. O how finely
They do spark their feet!
3rd Elve. Divinely!
I can scarcely keep from dancing,
'Tis so wild a measure!
4th Elve. E'en the heavy steeds are prancing
With uneasy pleasure!
2nd Elve. Smooth the cadence of the music,
Smooth as wind!
5th Elve. O me! I'm dew-sick!—
All. Glutton! glutton! you've been drinking
Till your very eyes are winking!
4th Elve. Put him to bed in that green tuft!
2nd Elve. He should not have a bed so soft!
1st Elve. Let him be toss'd into a thistle!
3rd Elve. We'll tease his nose with barley-bristle!
6th Elve. Or paint his face with that ceruse
Which our fine belladonnas use,
The sweet conserve of maiden-blushes.
1st Elve. Or cage him in a crib of rushes;
There let him lie in verdant jail
Till he out-mourns the nightingale.

4th Elve. Sad thing! what shall become of thee,
When thy light nature wanes to something new?—
Say'st thou, sad thing?—
5th Elve. O let me, let me be
A gliding minnow in a stream of dew!
2nd Elve. The sot!
1st Elve. The dolt!
6th Elve. The epicure!
'Twere wrong to call him else, I'm sure.

Each twilight-come
At beetle-drum,
For nectar he a-hunting goes,
The twisted bine
He stoops for wine,
Or sups it fresh from off the rose

In violet blue
He pokes for dew,
And gapes at Heaven for starry tears;
Till Phebus laughs
He crows and quaffs,
Frighting the lark with bacchant cheers.

From night to morn
His amber horn
He fills at every honey-fountain,
And draineth up
Each flowery cup
That brims with balm on mead or mountain.

2nd Elve. Hi! hi!
4th Elve. Whither? whither?
2nd Elve. I must try to get that feather
Floating near the stilly sun.

4th Elve. Now you have it; clap it on!
What a gallant bonnet-plume,
Ruby-black with golden bloom!
2nd Elve. It must have belonged, I swear,
To some gaudy bird of air;
One of the purple-crested team who fly
With the Junonian curricle;
Or he that with rich breast, and tawny eye,
Flames at the Sminthian's chariot wheel.
1st Elve. But where is Nephon? who can tell?
7th Elve. How wondrous grand he's grown of late!
8th Elve. And walks so high! and slaps his pate
Ten times a moment, as the state
Of Fairyland depended on him,
Or tit-mice had agreed to crown him.
3rd Elve. And takes such mighty airs upon him
As I can witness: 'Twas but now
I challenged him to ride the bough,
When pursing bigly—"Silly thou!
Trouble me not," said he, and stalk'd
As stiff as if a radish walk'd
Past me, forsooth!
1st Elve. He has not talk'd
Of any body but himself
This mortal day.
2nd Elve. Conceited elf!
Would he were bottled on a shelf!
Osme. Fay-ladies be not scandalous,
Ah speak not of poor Nephon thus!
3rd Elve. Then, wherefore should he sneer at us?
7th Elve. He grows more haughty every day
'Cause he's the queen's factotal fay,
And scorns with other elves to play.
4th Elve. When will his Excellence appear?

Osme. He sent a wild-dove messenger
To bid us all assemble here,
On the green glade; for he had some
Great work in hand,——
7th Elve. The saucy gnome!
"Bid us" forsooth!
Floretta. I wish he'd come!
I hear on distant heaths behind
A hare-bell weeping to the wind,
Unkind Floretta! ah, unkind
To leave me thus forsaken!
Osme. I
Will mount a crowback to the sky,
Morgana waits for me on high.
[*Laughter without.*
All. Hist! hist!
(*Without.*) Ha! ha! ha!
All. List! list!
(*Without.*) Ha! ha! ha!
All. In the noisy name of thunder
What is all this rout, I wonder?
(*Without.*) Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Enter NEPHON *with his lap full of flowers.*

Nephon.
Lady and gentleman fays, come buy!
No pedlar has such a rich packet as I.

Who wants a gown
Of purple fold,
Embroider'd down
The seams with gold?
See here!—a Tulip richly laced
To please a royal fairy's taste!

Who wants a cap
Of crimson grand?
By great good hap
I've one on hand:
Look, sir!—a Cock's-comb, flowing red,
'Tis just the thing, sir, for your head!

Who wants a frock
Of vestal hue?
Or snowy smock?—
Fair maid, do you?
O me!—a Lady smock so white!
Your bosom's self is not more bright!

Who wants to sport
A slender limb?
I've every sort
Of hose for him:
Both scarlet, striped, and yellow ones:
This Woodbine makes such pantaloons!

Who wants—(hush! hush!)
A box of paint?
'Twill give a blush,
Yet leave no taint:
This Rose with natural rouge is fill'd,
From its own dewy leaves distill'd.
Then lady and gentleman fays, come buy!
You never will meet such a merchant as I!

[*A sprig of broom falls at his feet.*

Nephon. Bow! wow!
Floretta. What is this,
With spikes and thorns, but not a leaf on?

Nephon. By my fay! I think it is
A rod for Nephon
Whe-e-e-w!
I shall be whipt, as sure as I
Stand here. Holla! you idle Elves!
Leap, skip, hop, jump, bounce, fly,
And range yourselves.
Obedient, till I lesson you
In what you have each one, to do.
You, sir! you, sir! you, sir! you!
Knight, and squire, and stout soldado,
To your charge, good men and true,
We commit this happy meadow.
From yon dingle to that dell,
See no hostile foot profane it;
And let minute-trumpets tell
How ye steadily maintain it.
Drums strike up, and clarions bray!
Ranks i' the rear take open order!
Left foot foremost! March away!
On by the Valley's midland border!
[*Exit with the rest of the army.*

V.

THE BATTLE.

(ACT V., SCENES VII., VIII.)

The fairy camp, with tents displayed,
Squadrons and glittering files arrayed
In strict battalia o'er the plain:
Gay trumpets sound the shrill refrain;
From field to field loud orders ring,
And couriers scour from wing to wing.
On a soft ambling jennet-fly
And girt with elfin chivalry

Who mingle in suppressed debate,
Rides forth the pigmy Autocrat.
Her ivory spear swings in its rest,
Close and succinct her martial vest
Tucked up above her snowy knee,
A miniature Penthesilee!
Her Amazonian nymphs beside
Their queen, at humble distance ride;

Encased in golden helms their hair,
In corslets steel their bosoms fair,
With trousered skirt loopt strait and high
Upon the limb's white luxury,
That clasps so firm, yet soft, each steed
Thinks himself manfully bestrid,
And snorts and paws with fierce delight,
Proud of his own young Maiden-knight,
Whose moony targe at saddle-bow
Hangs loose, and glimmers as they go.
Now breathe your fifes and roll your drums,
'Tis the Queen's Majesty that comes!

Morgana. Look out! look out!—Floretta should be here;
Or Osmé whom we sent.— [*Exeunt* Scouts.
Nephon, droop not,
Thou didst perform thy careful duty well!
Rash and presumptuous Youth! he merits all
The punishment he suffers: To neglect
The warning that thou gav'st him ere he past
Insolent o'er the bounds, where his perdition
Gaped for him, like the monster of the Nile,
In every brake and jungle!

Nephon. Madam, indeed,
I told him 'twas a fiendish stratagem,

To lure him over, but he would not hear;
Stampt when I plucked his skirt, and swung his sword
Round by the wrist, so that I'd lost my hold
And hand together, but I let him go.

Morgana. I know, I saw it; thou art not to blame.
Proud of his azure weapon, he would cope
With those who scorn it, as they do the edge
Of bladed feather, or those grassy swords
Which our soft tourneyers wield—

(*Cry without.*) A messenger!

Enter OSME.

Morgana. Where is thy sister? hast thou seen her, say?

Osme. Here comes the elve, weeping her silent way:
Some dreadful news I wot she brings,
So lost in grief the wretch appears;
Her head she hides beneath her wings,
And cannot tell her tale for tears!

Morgana.
The Maid is lost!—Arm! arm, ye warlike elves
With potent virtues now endue yourselves;
Lay by your puppet swords and spears and shields,
We must prepare for other fights and fields.
Mount! mount with me in clouds the blackening sky!
War be the word, and Battle be the cry!

(FROM SCENE VIII.)

Wise in my weakness, I forego
The deeds of fell contest to show,
When Demon power met Godly host,
And battlefield was won and lost.
This has been sung in higher strain
Than ever shall be heard again!

I only tell ye to behold
A scene in sulphury volumes rolled,
And hear within the clang of arms,
Wild shouts, and dissonant alarms;
There came a mighty crush!—a pause
As dread succeeds—O righteous cause!
Be thine that note of victory
Which shakes the pillars of the sky
With loud symphonious melody!

Chorus of Spirits *within.*

Victory!—
Victory!—Lo! the fight is done!
Victory!—Lo! the field is won!
Victory! O victory!
Rejoice, ye glorious harps! rejoice!
Proclaim with one harmonious voice
Victory! Victory! Victory!

[*Enter the Fairy Host in triumph.*

Victory!—
Victory!—Lo! the fiends are fled!
Victory!—Lo! their king is dead!
Victory! O victory!
Pronounce it, with your silver tones,
And shining mouths, sweet clarions!
Victory! Victory! Victory!

Victory!—
Victory!—Lo! the welkin clears!
Victory!—Lo! the sun appears!
Victory! O victory!
The Powers of Darkness yield the Glen,
So breathe sweet harp and trump again—
Victory! Victory! Victory!

[*Exeunt rejoicing.*

VI.

TRIO.

(FROM ACT V., SCENE IX.)

JACINTHA AND ROSABELLE.

Two sweet Maidens sang together
  Tirra lirra! tirra lee!
Comes a Swain, and asks them whether
  He might join their tirra lee!
O how happy, happy he
Might he join their tirra lee!

To his prayer the nymphs replying—
  Tirra lirra! tirra lee!
Kept the silly shepherd sighing
  Still to join their tirra lee!
O how happy, happy he
Might he join their tirra lee!

Nought they said unto his suing,
  Nought but—tirra lirra lee!
For they loved to keep him wooing,
  Still to join their tirra lee!
O how happy, happy he
Might he join their tirra lee

ANDREA.

Looking sad while they were laughing,
  What, the silly clown! does he?—
Takes, in mere despair, to quaffing,
  Sweeter far than tirra lee!
O how happy, happy he
Pouring out his tirra lee!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

GEORGE DARLEY.

I.—HEROA.

BEAUTY'S bloom is on her cheek,
  Heaven's sweet lustre in her eyes
Yet her lips, that blush to speak,
  Tell me the sad maiden dies!

This they tell me in mine ear,
  Sideways, like an amorous dove,
And so soft, I scarce can hear,
  That the maiden dies for love.

So much will the sweet-one say,
  But no more!—perversely she—
Press her warmly as I may—
  Will not say she dies for me!

II.—PRAYER AT BURIAL.

To a Flower growing by the side of the Grave.

PRETTY flower! mourn for me:
  I'd rather hear thee sigh,
Than friends that counterfeit a grief,
  They feel no more than I!

Pretty flower! mourn for me:
  I'd rather have thy tear,
Than all a hypocritic world
  Could waste upon my bier!

Pretty flower! mourn for me:
And dirger's time to save,
Hang down thy little passing-bell
And ring me to my grave!

III.—I'M A ROVER.

I'M a rover! I'm a rover
Of the greenwood and the glade!
And I'll teach you to discover
Every Beauty of the shade!

I'm a rover! I'm a rover
Of the woodland and the dell!
And I know the leafy cover
Where the maiden-roses dwell!

I'm a rover! I'm a rover!
Where her couch the lily keeps;
And I'll bring you slily over—
You may kiss her as she sleeps!

I'm a rover! I'm a rover!
Where the cowslip quaffs the dew,
Where the bee delights to hover,
Come! I'll choose a cup for you!

IV.—O'ER THE VALLEY.

O'ER the valley, o'er the mountain!
By the pathway of the foam
Leading down from yonder fountain,—
Like a honey-bird, I roam!

Thro' the wild wood and the bower,
Like the golden-coated fly
Kissing ev'ry lady-flower,
As I pass her beauty by;

Tripping round and round the blossoms
That bespeck the grassy steep,
Into all their rosy bosoms
As I run away, I peep!

O'er the meadows gaily winging
Like an idle elf I rove,
My unheeded song a-singing
To the melody I love!

V.—LOVE'S LIKENESS.

O, MARK yon Rose-tree! when the West
Breathed on her with too warm a zest
She turns her cheek away
Yet, if one moment he refrain,
She turns her cheek to him again,
And woos him still to stay!

Is she not like a maiden coy,
Prest by some amorous-breathing boy?
Tho' coy, she courts him too:
Winding away her slender form,
She will not have him woo so warm
And yet will have him woo!

VI.—DIRGE.

By Mermen in the "Sea Bride." (MS.)

PRAYER unsaid, and mass unsung,
Deadman's dirge must still be rung:
Dingle-dong, the dead-bells sound!
Mermen chant his dirge around!

Wash him bloodless, smooth him fair,
Stretch his limbs, and sleek his hair:
Dingle-dong, the dead-bells go!
Mermen swing them to and fro!

In the wormless sands shall he
Feast for no foul gluttons be:
Dingle-dong, the dead-bells chime
Mermen keep the tone and time!

We must with a tombstone brave
Shut the shark out from his grave:
Dingle-dong, the dead-bells toll!
Mermen dirgers ring his knoll!

Such a slab will we lay o'er him
All the dead shall rise before him!
Dingle-dong, the dead-bells boom!
Mermen lay him in his tomb!

VII.—THE FALLEN STAR.

A STAR is gone! a star is gone!
There is a blank in Heav'n,
One of the cherub choir has done
His airy course this ev'n.

He sat upon the orb of fire
That hung for ages there,
And lent his music to the choir
That haunts the nightly air.

But when his thousand years are passed,
With a cherubic sigh
He vanished with his car at last,
For even cherubs die!

Hear how his angel-brothers mourn—
The minstrels of the spheres—
Each chiming sadly in his turn
And dropping splendid tears.

The planetary sisters all
  Join in the fatal song,
And weep this hapless brother's fall
  Who sang with them so long.

But deepest of the choral band
  The Lunar Spirit sings,
And with a bass according hand
  Sweeps all her sullen strings.

From the deep chambers of the dome
  Where sleepless Uriel lies,
His rude harmonic thunders come
  Mingled with mighty sighs.

The thousand car-borne cherubim,
  The wandering eleven,
All join to chant the dirge of him
  Who fell just now from Heav'n.

VIII.—IT IS NOT BEAUTY I DEMAND.

IT is not beauty I demand,
  A crystal brow, the moon's despair,
Nor the snow's daughter, a white hand,
  Nor mermaid's yellow pride of hair:

Tell me not of your starry eyes,
  Your lips that seem on roses fed,
Your breasts where Cupid tumbling lies,
  Nor sleeps for kissing of his bed:—

A bloomy pair of vermeil cheeks
  Like Hebe's in her ruddiest hours,
A breath that softer music speaks
  Than summer winds a-wooing flowers,

These are but gauds: nay—what are lips?
Coral beneath the ocean-stream,
Whose brink when your adventurer slips
Full oft he perisheth on them.

And what are cheeks, but ensigns oft
That wave hot youth to fields of blood?
Did Helen's breast, though e'er so soft,
Do Greece or Ilium any good?

Eyes can with baleful ardour burn;
Poison can breath, that erst perfumed;
There's many a white hand holds an urn
With lovers' hearts to dust consumed.

For crystal brows—there's nought within,
They are but empty cells for pride;
He who the Syren's hair would win
Is mostly strangled in the tide.

Give me, instead of beauty's bust,
A tender heart, a loyal mind
Which with temptation I would trust
Yet never linked with error find,—

One in whose gentle bosom, I
Could pour my secret heart of woes,
Like the care-burthen'd honey-fly
That hides his murmurs in the rose,—

My earthly comforter! whose love
So indefeasible might be,
That, when my spirit won above,
Hers could not stay for sympathy.

William Motherwell.

1797—1835.

Among the minor poets of Great Britain, Motherwell should maintain a leading position. Without that supreme adaptability to the genius of his countrymen which made Burns *facile princeps* in their hearts, Motherwell possesses an individuality such as all poets, as distinguished from mere versifiers, have. A fondness for archaic words and forms of speech gives an air of affectation to many of his productions; but even this may be forgiven when it has such splendid results as "The Cavalier's Song," which, had it been really written by Lovelace or Suckling, would have figured in every anthology. Unfortunately, Motherwell wrote too much—that is, too much in one vein. A multiplicity of short poems or songs by the same writer, and with the same mannerisms, surfeits the appetite. His biographer, Dr. M'Conechy, to whom what is known of the poet's life is chiefly due, is willing to base Motherwell's claim to fame upon his Scandinavian poems, predicting that the three herein cited "will survive the changes of time and the caprices of fashion." The *verve* and dramatic power, perhaps even the character of the race they assume to represent, may be embodied in these glowing lines; but there is always something of the original absent from a copy—and a copy or an

imitation at the best such poems as these must be. Motherwell is truest when singing his own pathetic and simple lyrics; and the claims to immortality are more likely to be admitted to the singer of "Jeanie Morrison" and "My Heid is like to rend" than to the author of "these splendid specimens of warlike invocation."

Motherwell, the son of a respectable tradesman, was born at Glasgow, on the 13th October, 1797. He studied in various scholastic institutions, in the first of which he is reported to have met the girl he afterwards immortalised as "Jeanie Morrison." The young couple never met after leaving school, and the lady knew nothing of the feelings she had excited in the breast of her boyish admirer until after his death: as he sings,—

> "O! dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
> Since we were sindered young,
> I've never seen your face, nor heard
> The music o' your tongue."

The future poet appears to have maintained a good character at the academies where he studied. A fellow-student at the Paisley Grammar School, where Motherwell remained till he was fifteen, said of him, "What the boy was most remarkable for was his gift of spinning long yarns about castles, and robbers, and strange out-of-the-way adventures, with which, while Mr. Peddie (the head-master) imagined he was assisting his classfellows with their lessons, he would entertain them for hours, day after day, like some of the famous story-tellers in the *Arabian Nights*."

At the age of fifteen a clerkship was obtained for

Motherwell in the office of the Paisley Sheriff-Clerk. The position provided him with a comfortable income, and sufficient opportunities to indulge his tastes for researches into the past and his talents for poetry. He collected a large library of poetry and "historical romance," and at the same time became an author himself, contributing to and editing various local publications.

Motherwell's first volume, the "Harp of Renfrewshire," appeared anonymously in 1819. It is a collection of songs and poems, many original, with valuable critical and biographical notes, and an introductory essay by the editor. It was followed by a far more important work, "Minstrelsy Ancient and Modern," published at Glasgow, in 1827, with Motherwell's name as editor. This publication procured him an immediate entry into the world of letters, and brought him into communication with Scott and other prominent literary men; but the way in which he tampered with some of the old ballads in the collection exposed him, and not altogether unjustly, to some very severe criticism. During this time he was contributing most of his best pieces to local publications, and successfully editing some provincial journals. In 1832 he collected his various fugitive verses, and published them in a small volume as "Poems Narrative and Lyrical." This scarce little book received but slight attention at the time of its appearance, although it contained most of its author's best and most elaborately revised productions. As an example of the care he exercised in the polishing and correcting his verse may be instanced his favourite ballad of "Jeanie Morrison." The popular theory is that the first draft of this poem was made

when its author was only fourteen; but the earliest known manuscript of it cannot date further back than his eighteenth year. It was not published until Motherwell was thirty-four, and the intervening drafts show how laborious and elaborate was the process by which the poem was wrought to perfection.

In February 1830 Motherwell accepted the editorial charge of the *Glasgow Courier*, and retained his connection with it until his death. His last literary labour, undertaken in conjunction with Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, was the editing, with notes, the works of Burns. He did not live to contribute much towards this enterprise, being suddenly carried off by apoplexy on the 1st November, 1835.

Another work he did not live to complete was an unfinished romance, said to be "an embodiment of the old wild legends of the Norsemen"—always a favourite theme with Motherwell—and to contain "passages of surpassing splendour, animated by a wayward spirit, half merriment, half pathos." A life of Tannahill, for which he had collected much interesting material, was, also, left incomplete.

Motherwell can scarcely be termed a great poet in the general acceptation of the title; he did not bequeath to his countrymen such imperishable nationalistic lays as those of Burns, nor even such ever-popular songs as Moore's; but, limited as were his powers, we feel that he has enriched British literature with poems no lover of true poesy will willingly let perish.

JOHN H. INGRAM.

SONGS AND BALLADS.

WILLIAM MOTHERWELL.

I.—THE CAVALIER'S SONG.

A STEED! a steed of matchlesse speed,
A sword of metal keene!
All else to noble heartes is drosse,
All else on earth is meane.
The neighyinge of the war-horse prowde,
The rowlinge of the drum,
The clangor of the trumpet lowde,
Be soundes from heaven that come;
And O! the thundering presse of knightes
Whenas their war cryes swell,
May tole from heaven an angel brighte,
And rouse a fiend from hell.

Then mounte! then mounte, brave gallants, all,
And don your helmes amaine:
Deathe's couriers, Fame and Honour, call
Us to the field againe.
No shrewish teares shall fill our eye
When the sword-hilt's in our hand,—
Heart whole we'll part, and no whit sighe
For the fayrest of the land!
Let piping swaine, and craven wight,
Thus weepe and puling crye,
Our business is like men to fight,
And hero-like to die!

II.—THE TROOPER'S DITTY.

BOOT, boot into the stirrup, lads,
And hand once more on rein;
Up, up into the saddle, lads,
A-field we ride again:
One cheer, one cheer for dame or dear,
No leisure now to sigh,
God bless them all—we have their prayers,
And they our hearts—"Good-bye!"
Off, off we ride, in reckless pride,
As gallant troopers may,
Who have old scores to settle, and
Long slashing swords to pay.

The trumpet calls—"trot out, trot out,"—
We cheer the stirring sound;
Swords forth, my lads—through smoke and dust
We thunder o'er the ground.
Tramp, tramp, we go through sulphury clouds,
That blind us while we sing,—
Woe worth the knave who follows not
The banner of the King;
But luck befall each trooper tall,
That cleaves to saddle-tree,
Whose long sword carves on rebel sconce,
The rights of Majesty.

Spur on, my lads; the trumpet sounds
Its last and stern command—
"A charge! a charge!"—an ocean burst
Upon a stormy strand.

Ha! ha! how thickly on our casques
Their pop-guns rattle shot;
Spur on, my lads, we'll give it them
As sharply as we've got.
Now for it :—now, bend to the work—
Their lines begin to shake;
Now, through and through them—bloody lanes
Our flashing sabres make!

"Cut one—cut two—first point," and then
We'll parry as we may;
On, on the knaves, and give them steel
In bellyfuls to-day.
Hurrah! hurrah! for Church and State,
For Country and for Crown,
We slash away, and right and left
Hew rogues and rebels down.
Another cheer! the field is clear,
The day is all our own;
Done like our sires,—done like the swords
God gives to guard the Throne!

III.—JEANIE MORRISON.

I'VE wandered east, I've wandered west,
Through mony a weary way;
But never, never can forget
The luve o' life's young day!
The fire that's blawn on Beltane e'en,
May weel be black gin Yule;
But blacker fa' awaits the heart
Where first fond luve grows cule.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
The thochts o' bygane years
Still fling their shadows ower my path,
And blind my een wi' tears:
They blind my een wi' saut, saut tears,
And sair and sick I pine,
As memory idly summons up
The blithe blinks o' langsyne.

'Twas then we luvit ilk ither weel,
'Twas then we twa did part;
Sweet time—sad time! twa bairns at scule,
Twa bairns, and but ae heart!
'Twas then we sat on ae laigh bink,
To leir ilk ither lear;
And tones, and looks, and smiles were shed,
Remembered evermair.

I wonder, Jeanie, aften yet,
When sitting on that bink,
Cheek touchin' cheek, loof lock'd in loof,
What our wee heads could think?
When baith bent doun ower ae braid page,
Wi' ae buik on our knee,
Thy lips were on thy lesson, but
My lesson was in thee.

Oh, mind ye how we hung our heads,
How cheeks brent red wi' shame,
Whene'er the scule-weans, laughin' said,
We cleek'd thegither hame?
And mind ye o' the Saturdays,
(The scule then skail't at noon,)
When we ran aff to speel the braes—
The broomy braes o' June?

My head rins round and round about,
  My heart flows like a sea,
As ane by ane the thochts rush back
  O' scule-time and o' thee.
Oh, mornin' life! Oh, mornin' luve!
  Oh lichtsome days and lang,
When hinnied hopes around our hearts
  Like simmer blossoms sprang!

O mind ye, luve, how aft we left
  The deavin' dinsome toun,
To wander by the green burn-side,
  And hear its waters croon?
The simmer leaves hung ower our heads,
  The flowers burst round our feet,
And in the gloamin' o' the wood,
  The throssil whusslit sweet;

The throssil whusslit in the wood,
  The burn sang to the trees,
And we with Nature's heart in tune,
  Concerted harmonies;
And on the knowe abune the burn,
  For hours thegither sat
In the silentness o' joy, till baith
  Wi' very gladness grat.

Aye, aye, dear Jeanie Morrison,
  Tears trinkled doun your cheek,
Like dew-beads on a rose, yet nane
  Had ony power to speak!
That was a time, a blessed time,
  When hearts were fresh and young,
When freely gushed all feelings forth,
  Unsyllabled—unsung!

I marvel, Jeanie Morrison,
Gin I hae been to thee
As closely twined wi' earliest thochts,
As ye hae been to me?
Oh! tell me gin their music fills
Thine ear as it does mine;
Oh! say gin e'er your heart grows grit
Wi' dreamings o' langsyne?

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
I've borne a weary lot;
But in my wanderings, far or near,
Ye never were forgot.
The fount that first burst frae this heart,
Still travels on its way;
And channels deeper as it rins,
The luve o' life's young day.

O, dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
Since we were sindered young,
I've never seen your face, nor heard
The music o' your tongue;
But I could hug all wretchedness,
And happy could I die,
Did I but ken your heart still dreamed
O' bygane days and me!

IV.—MY HEID IS LIKE TO REND, WILLIE.

MY heid is like to rend, Willie,
My heart is like to break—
I'm wearin' aff my feet, Willie,
I'm dyin' for your sake!

Oh lay your cheek to mine, Willie,
Your hand on my briest-bane—
Oh say ye'll think on me, Willie,
When I am deid and gane!

It's vain to comfort me, Willie,
Sair grief maun hae its will—
But let me rest upon your briest,
To sab and greet my fill.
Let me sit on your knee, Willie,
Let me shed by your hair,
And look into the face, Willie,
I never sall see mair!

I'm sittin' on your knee, Willie,
For the last time in my life—
A puir heart-broken thing, Willie,
A mither, yet nae wife.
Ay, press your hand upon my heart,
And press it mair and mair—
Or it will burst the silken twine
Sae strang is its despair!

Oh wae's me for the hour, Willie,
When we thegither met—
Oh wae's me for the time, Willie,
That our first tryst was set!
Oh wae's me for the loanin' green
Where we were wont to gae—
And wae's me for the destinie
That gart me love thee sae!

Oh! dinna mind my words, Willie,
I downa seek to blame—
But oh! it's hard to live, Willie,
And dree a warld's shame!
Het tears are hailin' ower your cheek,
And hailin' ower your chin;
Why weep ye sae for worthlessness,
For sorrow and for sin?

I'm weary o' this warld, Willie,
And sick wi' a' I see—
I canna live as I hae lived,
Or be as I should be.
But fauld unto your heart, Willie,
The heart that still is thine—
And kiss ance mair the white, white cheek,
Ye said was red langsyne.

A stoun' gaes through my heid, Willie,
A sair stoun' through my heart—
Oh! haud me up and let me kiss
Thy brow ere we twa pairt.
Anither, and anither yet!—
How fast my life-strings break!
Fareweel! fareweel! through yon kirk-yaird
Step lichtly for my sake!

The lav'rock in the lift, Willie,
That lilts far ower our heid,
Will sing the morn as merrilie
Abune the clay-cauld deid;
And this green turf we're sittin' on,
Wi' dew-draps shimmerin' sheen,
Will hap the heart that luvit thee
As warld has seldom seen.

But oh! remember me, Willie,
On land where'er ye be—
And oh! think on the leal, leal heart,
That ne'er luvit ane but thee!
And oh! think on the cauld, cauld mools,
That file my yellow hair—
That kiss the cheek, and kiss the chin,
Ye never sall kiss mair!

V.—WHEN I BENEATH THE COLD RED EARTH AM SLEEPING.

WHEN I beneath the cold red earth am sleeping,
Life's fever o'er,
Will there for me be any bright eye weeping
That I'm no more?
Will there be any heart still memory keeping
Of heretofore?

When the great winds through leafless forests rushing,
Like full hearts break,
When the swollen streams, o'er crag and gully gushing
Sad music make;
Will there be one whose heart despair is crushing
Mourn for my sake?

When the bright sun upon that spot is shining
With purest ray,
And the small flowers their buds and blossoms twining,
Burst through that clay;
Will there be one still on that spot repining
Lost hopes all day?

When the night shadows, with the ample sweeping
Of her dark pall;
The world and all its manifold creation sleeping,
The great and small—
Will there be one, even at that dread hour, weeping
For me—for all?

When no star twinkles with its eye of glory,
On that low mound;
And wintry storms have with their ruins hoary
Its loneness crowned;
Will there be then one versed in misery's story
Pacing it round?

It may be so,—but this is selfish sorrow
To ask such meed,—
A weakness and a wickedness to borrow
From hearts that bleed,
The wailings of to-day, for what to-morrow
Shall never need.

Lay me then gently in my narrow dwelling,
Thou gentle heart;
And though thy bosom should with grief be swelling,
Let no tear start;
It were in vain,—for Time hath long been knelling—
Sad one, depart!

NORSE POEMS.

WILLIAM MOTHERWELL.

I.—THE BATTLE-FLAG OF SIGURD.

I.

THE eagle hearts of all the North
Have left their stormy strand;
The warriors of the world are forth
To choose another land!
Again, their long keels sheer the wave,
Their broad sheets court the breeze;
Again, the reckless and the brave,
Ride lords of weltering seas.
Nor swifter from the well-bent bow
Can feathered shaft be sped,
Than o'er the ocean's flood of snow
Their snoring galleys tread.
Then lift the can to bearded lip,
And smite each sounding shield,
Wassaile! to every dark-ribbed ship,
To every battle-field!
So proudly the Skalds raise their voices of triumph,
As the Northmen ride over the broad-bosom'd billow.

II.

Aloft, Sigurdir's battle-flag
Streams onward to the land,
Well may the taint of slaughter lag
On yonder glorious strand.
The waters of the mighty deep,
The wild birds of the sky,
Hear it like vengeance shoreward sweep,
Where moody men must die.
The waves wax wroth beneath our keel—

The clouds above us lower,
They know the battle sign, and feel
All its resistless power!
Who now uprears Sigurdir's flag,
Nor shuns an early tomb?
Who shoreward through the swelling surge,
Shall bear the scroll of doom?
So shout the Skalds as the long ships are nearing
The low-lying shores of a beautiful land.

III.

Silent the Self-devoted stood
Beside the massive tree;
His image mirror'd in the flood
Was terrible to see!
As leaning on his gleaming axe,
And gazing on the wave,
His fearless soul was churning up,
The death-rune of the brave.
Upheaving then his giant form
Upon the brown bark's prow,
And tossing back the yellow storm
Of hair from his broad brow;
The lips of song burst open, and
The words of fire rushed out,
And thundering through that martial crew
Pealed Harald's battle shout;—
It is Harald the dauntless that lifteth his great voice,
As the Northmen roll on with the Doom-written banner.

IV.

"I bear Sigurdir's battle-flag
Through sunshine or through gloom;
Through swelling surge on bloody strand
I plant the scroll of doom!

On Scandia's lonest, bleakest waste,
Beneath a starless sky,
The shadowy Three like meteors passed,
And bade young Harald die;—
They sang the war-deeds of his sires,
And pointed to their tomb;
They told him that this glory-flag
Was his by right of doom.
Since then, where hath young Harald been,
But where Jarl's son should be?
'Mid war and waves—the combat keen
That raged on land or sea!"
So sings the fierce Harald, the thirster for glory,
As his hand bears aloft the dark death-laden banner.

v.

"Mine own death's in this clenched hand!
I know the noble trust;
These limbs must rot on yonder strand—
These lips must lick its dust,
But shall this dusky standard quail
In the red slaughter day;
Or shall this heart its purpose fail—
This arm forget to slay?
I trample down such idle doubt;
Harald's high blood hath sprung
From sires whose hands in martial bout
Hath ne'er belied their tongue;—
Nor keener from their castled rock
Rush eagles on their prey,
Than, panting for the battle-shock,
Young Harald leads the way."
It is thus that tall Harald, in terrible beauty,
Pours forth his big soul to the joyaunce of heroes.

VI.

"The ship-borne warriors of the North,
The sons of Woden's race,
To battle as to feast go forth,
With stern, and changeless face;
And I, the last of a great line—
The Self-devoted, long
To lift on high the Runic sign
Which gives my name to song.
In battle-field young Harald falls
Amid a slaughtered foe,
But backward never bears this flag,
While streams to ocean flow;
On, on above the crowded dead
This Runic scroll shall flare.
And round it shall the lightnings spread,
From swords that never spare."

So rush the hero-words from the Death-doomed one,
While Skalds harp aloud the renown of his fathers.

VII.

"Flag! from your folds, and fiercely wake
War-music on the wind,
Lest tenderest thoughts should rise to shake
The sternness of my mind;
Brynhilda, maiden meek and fair,
Pale watcher by the sea,
I hear thy wailings on the air,
Thy heart's dirge sung for me;—
In vain thy milk-white hands are wrung
Above the salt sea foam;
The wave that bears me from thy bower,
Shall never bear me home;

Brynhilda! seek another love,
But ne'er wed one like me,
Who death foredoomed from above
Joys in his destiny."
Thus mourned young Harald as he thought on Brynhilda,
While his eyes filled with tears which glittered, but fell not.

VIII.

"On sweeps Sigurdir's battle-flag,
The scourge of far from shore;
It dashes through the seething foam,
But I return no more!
Wedded unto a fatal bride—
Boune for a bloody bed—
And battling for her, side by side,
Young Harald's doom is sped!
In starkest fight, where kemp on kemp,
Reel headlong to the grave,
There Harald's axe shall ponderous ring,
There Sigurd's flag shall wave;—
Yes, underneath this standard tall,
Beside this fateful scroll,
Down shall the tower-like prison fall
Of Harald's haughty soul."
So sings the Death-seeker, while nearer and nearer
The fleet of the Northmen bears down to the shore.

IX.

"Green lie those thickly-timbered shores
Fair sloping to the sea:
They're cumbered with the harvest stores
That wave but for the free:
Our sickle is the gleaming sword,
Our garner the broad shield;

Let peasants sow, but still he's lord
Who's master of the field;
Let them come on, the bastard-born,
Each soil-stain'd churle!—alack!
What gain they but a splitten skull,
A sod for their base back?
They sow for us these goodly lands,
We reap them in our might,
Scorning all title but the brands
That triumph in the fight!"
It was thus the land-winners of old gained their glory,
And grey stones voiced their praise in the bays of far isles.

X.

"The rivers of yon island low,
Glance redly in the sun,
But ruddier still they're doomed to glow,
And deeper shall they run;
The torrent of proud life shall swell
Each river to the brim,
And in that spate of blood, how well
The headless corpse will swim!
The smoke of many a shepherd's cot
Curls from each peopled glen;
And, hark! the song of maidens mild,
The shout of joyous men!
But one may hew the oaken tree,
The other shape the shroud;
As the LANDEYDA o'er the sea
Sweeps like a tempest cloud:"—
So shouteth fierce Harald—so echo the Northmen,
As shoreward their ships like mad steeds are careering.

XI.

"Sigurdir's battle-flag is spread
Abroad to the blue sky,
And spectral visions of the dead
Are trooping grimly by;
The spirit heralds rush before
Harald's destroying brand,
They hover o'er yon fated shore
And death-devoted band.
Marshall, stout Jarls, your battle fast!
And fire each beacon height,
Our galleys anchor in the sound,
Our banner heaves in sight!
And through the surge and arrowy shower
That rains on this broad shield,
Harald uplifts the sign of power
Which rules the battle-field!"
So cries the Death-doomed on the red strand of slaughter
While the helmets of heroes like anvils are ringing.

XII.

On rolled the Northmen's war, above
The Raven Standard flew,
Nor tide nor tempest ever strove
With vengeance half so true.
'Tis Harald—'tis the Sire-bereaved—
Who goads the dread career,
And high amid the flashing storm
The flag of Doom doth rear.
"On, on," the tall Death-seeker cries,
"These earth-worms soil our heel,
Their spear-points crasp like crisping ice
On ribs of stubborn steel!"

Hurra! hurra! their whirlwinds sweep,
And Harald's fate is sped;
Bear on the flag—he goes to sleep
With the life-scorning dead.

Thus fell the young Harald, as of old fell his sires,
And the bright hall of heroes bade hail to his spirit.

II.—THE WOOING SONG OF JARL EGILL SKALLAGRIM.

BRIGHT maiden of Orkney,
Star of the blue sea!
I've swept o'er the waters
To gaze upon thee;
I've left spoil and slaughter,
I've left a far strand,
To sing how I love thee,
To kiss thy small hand!
Fair Daughter of Einar,
Golden-haired maid!
The lord of yon brown bark,
And lord of this blade;
The joy of the ocean—
Of warfare and wind,
Hath boune him to woo thee,
And thou must be kind.

So stoutly Jarl Egill wooed Torf Eĩnar's daughter.

In Jutland—in Iceland
On Neustria's shore,
Where'er the dark billow
My gallant bark bore,
Songs spoke of thy beauty,
Harps sounded thy praise,

And my heart loved thee long ere
It thrilled in thy gaze;
Ay, Daughter of Einar,
Right tall may'st thou stand,
It is a Vikingir
Who kisses thy hand;
It is a Vikingir
That bends his proud knee,
And swears by Great Freya,
His bride thou must be!
So Jarl Egill swore when his great heart was fullest.

Thy white arms are locked in
Broad bracelets of gold;
Thy girdle-stead's gleaming
With treasures untold:
The circlet that binds up
Thy long yellow hair,
Is starred thick with jewels,
That bright are and rare;
But gifts yet more princely
Jarl Egill bestows,
For girdle, his great arm
Around thee he throws;
The bark of a sea-king
For palace, gives he,
While mad waves and winds shall
Thy true subjects be.
So richly Jarl Egill endowed his bright bride.

Nay, frown not, nor shrink thus,
Nor toss so thy head,
'Tis a Vikingir asks thee,
Land-maiden, to wed!

He skills not to woo thee,
In trembling and fear,
Though lords of the land may
Thus troop with the deer.
The cradle he rock'd in
So sound and so long,
Hath framed him a heart
And a hand that are strong:
He comes then as Jarl should,
Sword belted to side,
To win thee and wear thee
With glory and pride.
So sternly Jarl Egill wooed, and smote his long brand.

Thy father, thy brethren,
Thy kin keep from me,
The maiden I've sworn shall
Be Queen of the sea!
A truce with that folly—
Yon sea-strand can show
If this eye missed its aim,
Or this arm failed its blow:
I had not well taken
Three strides on this land
Ere a Jarl and his six sons
In death bit the sand.
Nay, weep not, pale maid, though
In battle should fall
The kemps who would keep thy
Bridegroom from the hall.
So carped Jarl Egill, and kissed the bright weeper.

Through shadows and horrors
In worlds underground,

Through sounds that appal
And through sights that confound,
I sought the Weird women
Within their dark cell,
And made them surrender
Futurity's spell;
I made them rune over
The dim scroll so free,
And mutter how Fate sped
With lovers like me.
Yes, maiden, I forced them
To read forth my doom,
To say how I should fare
As jolly bridegroom.
So Jarl Egill's love dared the world of grim shadows.

They waxed and they waned,
They passed to and fro,
While lurid fires gleamed o'er
Their faces of snow;
Their stony eyes moveless,
Did glare on me long,
Then sullen they chanted:
"The Sword and the Song
Prevail with the gentle,
Sore chasten the rude,
And sway to their purpose
Each evil-shaped mood!"
Fair Daughter of Einar,
I've sung the dark lay
That the Weird sisters runed, and
Which thou must obey.
So fondly Jarl Egill loved Einar's proud daughter.

The curl of that proud lip,
The flash of that eye,
The swell of that bosom,
So full and so high,
Like foam of sea-billow,
Thy white bosom shows,
Like flash of red levin
Thine eagle eye glows:
Ha! firmly and boldly,
So stately and free,
Thy foot treads this chamber,
As bark rides the sea:
This likes me—this likes me,
Stout maiden of mould,
Thou wooest to purpose;
Bold hearts love the bold.

So shouted Jarl Egill, and clutched the proud maiden.

Away and away then,
I have thy small hand;
Joy with me—our tall bark
Now bears toward the strand;
I call it The Raven,
The wing of black night,
That shadows forth ruin
O'er islands of light:
Once more on its long deck,
Behind us the gale,
Thou shalt see how before it
Great kingdoms do quail;
Thou shalt see then how truly
My noble-souled maid,

The ransom of kings can
Be won by this blade.
So bravely Jarl Egill did soothe the pale trembler.

Ay, gaze on its large hilt,
One wedge of red gold;
But doat on its blade, gilt
With blood of the bold.
The hilt is right seemly,
But nobler the blade,
That swart Velint's hammer
With cunning spells made;
I call it the Adder,
Death lurks in its bite,
Through bone and proof-harness
It scatters pale light.
Fair Daughter of Einar,
Deem high of the fate
That makes thee, like this blade
Proud Egill's loved mate!
So Jarl Egill bore off Torf Einar's bright daughter.

III.—THE SWORD CHANT OF THORSTEIN RAUDI.

'TIS not the grey hawk's flight
O'er mountain and mere;
'Tis not the fleet hound's course
Tracking the deer;
Tis not the light hoof print
Of black steed or grey,
Though sweltering it gallop
A long summer's day,

Which mete forth the Lordships
I challenge as mine;
Ha! ha! 'tis the good brand
I clutch in my strong hand,
That can their broad marches
And numbers define.
LAND GIVER! I kiss thee.

Dull builders of houses,
Base tillers of earth,
Gaping, ask me what lordships
I owned at my birth;
But the pale fools wax mute
When I point with my sword
East, west, north, and south,
Shouting, "There am I Lord!"
Wold and waste, town and tower,
Hill, valley, and stream,
Trembling, bow to my sway
In the fierce battle fray,
When the star that rules Fate, is
This falchion's red gleam.
MIGHTY GIVER! I kiss thee.

I've heard great harps sounding,
In brave bower and hall,
I've drank the sweet music
That bright lips let fall,
I've hunted in greenwood,
And heard small birds sing;
But away with this idle
And cold jargoning;
The music I love, is
The shout of the brave,
The yell of the dying,

The scream of the flying,
When this arm wields Death's sickle,
And garners the grave.
JOY GIVER! I kiss thee.

Far isles of the ocean
Thy lightning have known,
And wide o'er the main land
Thy horrors have shone.
Great sword of my father,
Stern joy of his hand,
Thou hast carved his name deep on
The stranger's red strand,
And won him the glory
Of undying song.
Keen cleaver of gay crests,
Sharp piercer of broad breasts,
Grim slayer of heroes,
And scourge of the strong.
FAME GIVER! I kiss thee.

In a love more abiding
Than that the heart knows,
For maiden more lovely
Than summer's first rose,
My heart's knit to thine,
And lives but for thee;
In dreamings of gladness,
Thou'rt dancing with me,
Brave measures of madness
In some battle-field,
Where armour is ringing,
And noble blood springing,
And cloven, yawn helmet,

Stout hauberk and shield.
DEATH GIVER! I kiss thee.

The smile of a maiden's eye
Soon may depart;
And light is the faith of
Fair woman's heart;
Changeful as light clouds,
And wayward as wind,
Be the passions that govern
Weak woman's mind.
But thy metal's as true
As its polish is bright;
When ills wax in number,
Thy love will not slumber,
But starlike, burns fiercer,
The darker the night.
HEART GLADDENER! I kiss thee.

My kindred have perished
By war or by wave—
Now, childless and sireless,
I long for the grave.
When the path of our glory
Is shadowed in death,
With me thou wilt slumber
Below the brown heath;
Thou wilt rest on my bosom,
And with it decay—
While harps shall be ringing,
And Scalds shall be singing
The deeds we have done in
Our old fearless day.
SONG GIVER! I kiss thee.

Thomas Hood.

1798—1845.

The irony of fate and fortune has seldom been more conspicuously manifested than in the instance of Thomas Hood, who, if merely known by his writings, would have been deemed the merriest of poets, and whose life was in truth a continuous struggle against ill-health and pecuniary misfortunes.

It is a brief and monotonous record. Hood was born on May 23rd, 1799. His father was a member of the firm of Verner, Hood, and Sharpe, publishers, who carried on business in the Poultry, London, and who were the original publishers of Bloomfield's poems. He was originally articled to an engraver, but being unable to bear the confinement of that occupation became a sub-editor of Taylor and Hessey's *London Magazine*, and devoted himself to literature. He married into a literary circle, espousing the sister of John Hamilton Reynolds, and rapidly produced much serious poetry, including "The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies," much more prose and verse of a humorous cast, and a novel, "Tylney Hall." In 1835 the failure of a commercial house, in which he would seem to have been a sleeping partner, drove him to the Continent, in the hope of freeing himself from debt by hard work and economy. In crossing to Holland he was overtaken by a terrible storm, which aggravated

his constitutional tendency to consumption, and he never again enjoyed good health. He bore up bravely, pouring forth floods of the most exuberant humour while almost worn out with sickness and trouble; and, after his return to England in 1840, successively editing the *New Monthly Magazine* and a magazine established by himself. The compositions by which he will be chiefly remembered mostly belong to this period of his life. He died on May 3rd, 1845.

Hood is an instance of the poet who, having begun in one way, is educated by circumstance into another, and dies just as he is finding his proper originality and his real self. A young man of marked poetical sensitiveness, he naturally imbibed his first notions of poetry from the school amid which he was thrown, which may be compendiously described as the school of Leigh Hunt. His affinities were especially strong with his connection John Hamilton Reynolds, one of the true poets who just miss distinction, one scarcely knows why. A characteristic note of Hunt, and Lamb, and Reynolds, is the union of deep feeling with playfulness. This was manifest in Hood from the first, and bestows a peculiar charm on his early poems; but graceful as are "The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies," and similar productions, the only pieces of his early period which unmistakably reveal the poet, are "Eugene Aram's Dream" and "Ruth," most felicitous inspirations. By a process of development which reverses that habitual to poets, as years advanced the humorous element seemed to gain at the expense of the serious, and the poetical heir of Lamb and Hunt appeared in danger of becoming a mere jester. In fact Hood's

poetical vein was far from exhausted, and the simple, prosaic, but tragical explanation of the bent he seemed to have taken was that he found it necessary to please to live—his puns sold better than his poems. When at length the impulse to serious composition again awoke, it was seen how immensely beneficial his comic period had been in giving him such a command of metre and language as few have possessed, and endowing him with the almost indispensable requisite for poetical immortality, a thoroughly individual style. In "Miss Kilmansegg" we have something new to English poetry; something also in its way so perfect that a further advance in the same direction seems inconceivable. It is the work of one who has learned to discard fancies for realities, while retaining all the grace and sprightliness with which he was wont to decorate his fancies. It represents the education of a life, and a nature which that education has been unable to spoil. It would be difficult to find a stronger instance of the versatility of the poetical spirit, and its power to raise the grotesque into the regions of poetry, and inspire wild fun with deep moral purpose. The poems on which Hood's fame principally rests—"The Song of the Shirt," "The Bridge of Sighs," are less characteristic of his genius than "Miss Kilmansegge," and perhaps owe their greater reputation mainly to their superior unity of feeling. There is no burlesque to conflict with the pathos, and obscure it for careless readers; the sense of tragedy is simple, undivided, and overwhelming. Characteristic illustrations of Hood's pathos, satire, and humour abound in "Miss Kilmansegg," of which the following are examples:—

"Poor Peggie hawks nosegays from street to street,
Till—think of that, who find life so sweet!—
She hates the smell of roses!

It would fill a Court Gazette to name
What East and West End people came
To the rite of Christianity:
The lofty Lord and the titled Dame,
All di'monds, plumes, and urbanity:
His Lordship the May'r with his golden chain,
And two Gold Sticks, and the Sheriffs twain,
Nine foreign Counts, and other great men
With their orders and stars, to help M or N
To renounce all pomp and vanity.

And Sir Jacob the Father strutted and bowed,
And smiled to himself, and laughed aloud,
To think of his heiress and daughter—
And then in his pockets he made a grope,
And then, in the fulness of joy and hope,
Seemed washing his hands with invisible soap,
In imperceptible water.

Few have taught so forcibly as Hood the truth that the sources of laughter and tears are very near together. Whether we look upon him as a master of frolic, or a master of pathos, his place among English poets is a high one. His hard struggle for existence enriched him with the qualities in which he at first seemed deficient; and the pieces composed under pressure of necessity, and perhaps without direct poetic intention, place him far higher than his deliberate bids for the name and fame of a poet.

RICHARD GARNETT.

LYRICS.

THOMAS HOOD.

I.

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER.

I REMEMBER, I remember,
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon,
Nor brought too long a day,
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away!

I remember, I remember,
The roses, red and white,
The violets, and the lily-cups,
Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birth-day—
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember,
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing;
My spirit flew in feathers then,
That is so heavy now,
And summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow!

I remember, I remember,
The fir trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky;
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from Heav'n
Than when I was a boy.

II.

FAIR INES.

O SAW ye not fair Ines?
She's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
And rob the world of rest:
She took our daylight with her,
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night,
For fear the Moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivalled bright;
And blessed will the lover be
That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier,
Who rode so gaily by thy side,
And whispered thee so near!
Where there no bonny dames at home,
Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
And banners waved before:
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
And snowy plumes they wore;
It would have been a beauteous dream—
If it had been no more!

Alas, alas, fair Ines,
She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, Farewell,
To her you've loved so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines,
That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before,—
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that blest one lover's heart
Has broken many more!

III.

BALLAD.

IT was not in the Winter
Our loving lot was cast;
It was the Time of Roses,—
We pluck'd them as we pass'd;

That churlish season never frown'd
On early lovers yet:—
Oh, no—the world was newly crown'd
With flowers when first we met!

'Twas twilight, and I bade you go,
But still you held me fast;
It was the Time of Roses,—
We pluck'd them as we pass'd.—

What else could peer my glowing cheek.
That tears began to stud!
And when I ask'd the like of Love,
You snatched a damask bud;

And oped it to the dainty core,
Still glowing to the last.—
It was the Time of Roses,—
We pluck'd them as we pass'd!

IV.

THE DEATH-BED.

WE watch'd her breathing through the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breath the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seem'd to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied—
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours.

V.

RUTH.

SHE stood breast high amid the corn
Clasp'd by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
Deeply ripen'd;—such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest none could tell,
But long lashes veil'd a light,
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim;—
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks.

Sure, I said, Heav'n did not mean,
Where I reap thou should'st but glean,
Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
Share my harvest and my home.

SONNETS.

THOMAS HOOD.

I.—SILENCE.

THERE is a silence where hath been no sound,
There is a silence where no sound may be,
In the cold grave—under the deep, deep sea,
Or in wide desert where no life is found,
Which hath been mute, and still must sleep profound
No voice is hush'd—no life treads silently,
But clouds and cloudy shadows wander free,
That never spoke, over the idle ground:
But in green ruins, in the desolate walls
Of antique palaces, where Man hath been,
Though the dun fox, or wild hyena, calls,
And owls, that flit continually between,
Shriek to the echo, and the low winds moan,—
There the true Silence is, self-conscious and alone.

II.—DEATH.

IT is not death, that—sometime—in a sigh
This eloquent breath shall take its speechless flight;
That—sometime—these bright stars, that now reply
In sunlight to the sun, shall set in night;
That this warm conscious flesh shall perish quite,
And all life's ruddy springs forget to flow;
That thoughts shall cease, and the immortal sprite
Be lapp'd in alien clay and laid below;
It is not death to know this,—but to know
That pious thoughts, which visit at new graves
In tender pilgrimage, will cease to go
So duly and so oft,—and when grass waves
Over the past-away, there may be then
No resurrection in the minds of men.

THE DREAM OF EUGENE ARAM.

1829.

THOMAS HOOD.

'TWAS in the prime of summer time,
An evening calm and cool,
And four-and-twenty happy boys
Came bounding out of school:
There were some that ran and some that leapt,
Like troutlets in a pool.

Away they sped with gamesome minds,
And souls untouch'd by sin;
To a level mead they came, and there
They drave the wickets in:
Pleasantly shone the setting sun
Over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they coursed about,
And shouted as they ran,—
Turning to mirth all things of earth
As only boyhood can;
But the Usher sat remote from all
A melancholy man!

His hat was off, his vest apart,
To catch heaven's blessèd breeze
For a burning thought was in his brow,
And his bosom ill at ease:
So he lean'd his head on his hands, and read
The book between his knees!

Leaf over leaf he turn'd it o'er,
Nor ever glanced aside,
For the peace of his soul he read that book
In the golden eventide:
Much study had made him very lean,
And pale, and leaden-eyed.

At last he shut the ponderous tome,
With a fast and fervent grasp
He strain'd the dusky covers close,
And fix'd the brazen hasp:
"Oh, God! could I so close my mind,
And clasp it with a clasp!"

Then leaping on his feet upright,
Some moody turns he took,—
Now up the mead, then down the mead,
And past a shady nook,—
And, lo! he saw a little boy
That pored upon a book!

"My gentle lad, what is't you read—
Romance or fairy fable?
Or is it some historic page,
Of kings and crowns unstable?"
The young boy gave an upward glance,—
"It is 'The Death of Abel.'"

The Usher took six hasty strides,
As smit with sudden pain,—
Six hasty strides beyond the place,
Then slowly back again;
And down he sat beside the lad,
And talk'd with him of Cain;

And, long since then, of bloody men,
Whose deeds tradition saves;

Of lonely folk cut off unseen,
And hid in sudden graves;
Of horrid stabs, in groves forlorn,
And murders done in caves;

And how the sprites of injured men
Shriek upward from the sod,—
Aye, how the ghostly hand will point
To show the burial clod;
And unknown facts of guilty acts
Are seen in dreams from God!

He told how murderers walk the earth
Beneath the curse of Cain—
With crimson clouds before their eyes
And flames about their brain:
For blood has left upon their souls
Its everlasting stain!

"And well," quoth he, "I know, for truth,
Their pangs must be extreme,—
Woe, woe, unutterable woe,—
Who spill life's sacred stream!
For why? Methought, last night, I wrought
A murder in my dream!

"One that had never done me wrong—
A feeble man, and old;
I led him to a lonely field,—
The moon shone clear and cold:
Now here, said I, this man shall die,
And I will have his gold!

"Two sudden blows with a ragged stick,
And one with a heavy stone,
One hurried gash with a hasty knife,—
And then the deed was done:

There was nothing lying at my foot
But lifeless flesh and bone!

"Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone,
That could not do me ill;
And yet I fear'd him all the more,
For lying there so still:
There was a manhood in his look,
That murder could not kill!

"And, lo! the universal air
Seem'd lit with ghastly flame;—
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame:
I took the dead man by his hand,
And call'd upon his name!

"Oh, God! it made me quake to see
Such sense within the slain!
But when I touch'd the lifeless clay,
The blood gush'd out amain!
For every clot, a burning spot
Was scorching in my brain!

"My head was like an ardent coal,
My heart as solid ice;
My wretched, wretched soul, I knew,
Was at the Devil's price;
A dozen times I groan'd; the dead
Had never groan'd but twice!

"And now, from forth the frowning sky
From the heaven's topmost height,
I heard a voice—the awful voice
Of the blood-avenging Sprite:—
'Thou guilty man! take up thy dead
And hide it from my sight!'

"I took the dreary body up,
And cast it in a stream,—
A sluggish water, black as ink,
The depth was so extreme:—
My gentle boy, remember this
Is nothing but a dream!

"Down went the corse with a hollow plunge,
And vanish'd in the pool!
Anon I cleans'd my bloody hands,
And wash'd my forehead cool,
And sat among the urchins young,
That evening in the school.

"Oh, heaven! to think of their white souls,
And mine so black and grim!
I could not share in childish prayer,
Nor join in Evening Hymn:
Like a Devil of the Pit I seem'd
'Mid holy Cherubim!

"And peace went with them, one and all,
And each calm pillow spread;
But Guilt was my grim chamberlain
That lighted me to bed;
And drew my midnight curtains round,
With fingers bloody red!

"All night I lay in agony,
In anguish dark and deep;
My fever'd eyes I dare not close,
But stared aghast at Sleep:
For Sin had render'd unto her
The keys of Hell to keep!

"All night I lay in agony,
From weary chime to chime,

With one besetting horrid hint,
That rack'd me all the time;
A mighty yearning, like the first
Fierce impulse unto crime!

"One stern tyrannic thought, that made
All other thoughts its slave;
Stronger and stronger every pulse
Did that temptation crave,—
Still urging me to go and see
The Dead Man in his grave!

"Heavily I rose up, as soon
As light was in the sky,
And sought the black accursèd pool
With a wild misgiving eye;
And I saw the Dead in the river bed,
For the faithless stream was dry.

"Merrily rose the lark, and shook
The dew-drop from its wing;
But I never mark'd its morning flight,
I never heard it sing:
For I was stooping once again
Under the horrid thing.

"With breathless speed, like a soul in chase,
I took him up and ran;—
There was no time to dig a grave
Before the day began:
In a lonesome wood, with heaps of leaves,
I hid the murder'd man!

"And all that day I read in school,
But my thought was other-where;
As soon as the mid-day task was done,
In secret I was there:

And a mighty wind had swept the leaves,
And still the corse was bare!

"Then down I cast me on my face,
And first began to weep,
For I knew my secret then was one
That earth refused to keep:
Or land or sea, though he should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.

"So wills the fierce avenging Sprite,
Till blood for blood atones!
Ay, though he's buried in a cave,
And trodden down with stones,
And years have rotted off his flesh,—
The world shall see his bones!

"Oh, God! that horrid, horrid dream
Besets me now awake!
Again—again, with dizzy brain,
The human life I take;
And my red right hand grows raging hot
Like Cranmer's at the stake.

"And still no peace for the restless clay,
Will wave or mould allow;
The horrid thing pursues my soul,—
It stands before me now!"
The fearful Boy look'd up, and saw
Huge drops upon his brow.

That very night, while gentle sleep
The urchin eyelids kiss'd,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
Through the cold and heavy mist;
And Eugene Aram walk'd between,
With gyves upon his wrist.

MISS KILMANSEGG AND HER PRECIOUS LEG.

THOMAS HOOD.

SELECTED STANZAS.

I.—HER CHILDHOOD.

OUR youth! our childhood! that spring of springs!
'Tis surely one of the blessedest things
  That nature ever invented!
When the rich are wealthy beyond their wealth,
And the poor are rich in spirits and health,
  And all with their lots contented!

There's little Phelim, he sings like a thrush,
In the selfsame pair of patchwork plush,
  With the selfsame empty pockets,
That tempted his daddy so often to cut
His throat, or jump in the water-butt—
But what cares Phelim? an empty nut
  Would sooner bring tears to their sockets.

  Give him a collar without a skirt,
  (That's the Irish linen for shirt)
And a slice of bread with a taste of dirt,
  (That's Poverty's Irish butter),
And what does he lack to make him blest?
Some oyster-shells, or a sparrow's nest,
  A candle-end, and a gutter.

But to leave the happy Phelim alone,
Gnawing, perchance, a marrowless bone,
  For which no dog would quarrel—
Turn we to little Miss Kilmansegg
Cutting her first little toothy-peg
  With a fifty-guinea coral—

A peg upon which
About poor and rich
Reflection might hang a moral.

II.—HER DREAM.

Oh, bed! oh, bed! delicious bed!
That heaven upon earth to the weary head;
But a place that to name would be ill-bred,
To the head with a wakeful trouble—
'Tis held by such a different lease!
To one, a place of comfort and peace,
All stuff'd with the down of stubble geese,
To another with only the stubble.

To one, a perfect Halcyon nest,
All calm, and balm and quiet, and rest,
And soft as the fur of the cony—
To another, so restless for body and head,
That the bed seems borrow'd from Nettlebed,
And the pillow from Stratford the Stony!

To the happy, a first-class carriage of ease,
To the Land of Nod, or where you please;
But alas! for the watchers and weepers,
Who turn, and turn, and turn again,
But turn, and turn, and turn in vain,
With an anxious brain,
And thoughts in a train
That does not run upon *sleepers*! . . .

And oh! when the blessed diurnal light
Is quench'd by the providential night,
To render our slumber more certain!
Pity, pity the wretches that weep,
For they must be wretched, who cannot sleep
When God himself draws the curtain!

The careful Betty the pillow beats,
And airs the blankets, and smooths the sheets,
  And gives the mattress a shaking—
But vainly Betty performs her part,
If a ruffled head and a rumpled heart,
  As well as the couch, want making.

There's Morbid, all bile, and verjuice, and nerves,
Where other people would make preserves,
  He turns his fruits into pickles:
Jealous, envious, and fretful by day,
At night, to his own sharp fancies a prey,
He lies like a hedgehog roll'd up the wrong way,
  Tormenting himself with his prickles.

But a child—that bids the world good night,
In downright earnest and cuts it quite—
  A Cherub no Art can copy,—
'Tis a perfect picture to see him lie
As if he had supp'd on a dormouse pie
(An ancient classical dish, by the by)
  With a sauce of syrup of poppy.

Oh, bed! bed! bed! delicious bed!
That heaven upon earth to the weary head,
  Whether lofty or low its condition!
But instead of putting our plagues on shelves,
In our blankets how often we toss ourselves,
Or are toss'd by such allegorical elves
  As Pride, Hate, Greed, and Ambition!

The independent Miss Kilmansegg
Took off her independent Leg
  And laid it beneath her pillow,
And then on the bed her frame she cast,

The time for repose had come at last,
But long, long, after the storm is past
  Rolls the turbid, turbulent billow.

No part she had in vulgar cares
That belong to common household affairs—
Nocturnal annoyances such as theirs,
  Who lie with a shrewd surmising,
That while they are couchant (a bitter cup!)
Their bread and butter are getting up,
  And the coals, confound them, are rising.

No fear she had her sleep to postpone,
Like the crippled Widow who weeps alone
And cannot make a doze her own,
  For the dread that mayhap on the morrow,
The true and Christian reading to baulk,
A broker will take up her bed and walk
  By way of curing her sorrow.

No cause like these she had to bewail,
But the breath of applause had blown a gale,
And winds from that quarter seldom fail
  To cause some human commotion;
But whenever such breezes coincide
      With the very spring-tide
      Of human pride,
  There's no such swell on the ocean!

Peace, and ease, and slumber lost,
She turn'd, and roll'd, and tumbled, and toss'd
  With a tumult that would not settle:
A common case, indeed, with such
As have too little, or think too much,
  Of the precious and glittering metal.

III.—HER DEATH.

'Tis a stern and startling thing to think
How often mortality stands on the brink
  Of its grave without any misgiving
And yet in this slippery world of strife,
In the stir of human bustle so rife,
There are daily sounds to tell us that Life
  Is dying, and Death is living!

Ay, Beauty the Girl, and Love the Boy,
Bright as they are with hope and joy,
  How their souls would sadden instanter,
To remember that one of those wedding bells,
Which ring so merrily through the dells,
    Is the same that knells
    Our last farewells,
  Only broken into a canter!

But breath and blood set doom at nought—
How little the wretched Countess thought,
  When at night she unloosed her sandal,
That the Fates had woven her burial-cloth,
And that Death, in the shape of a Death's Head Moth,
  Was fluttering round her candle!

As she look'd at her clock of or-molu,
For the hours she had gone so wearily through
  At the end of a day of trial—
How little she saw in her pride of prime
The dart of Death in the Hand of Time—
  That hand which moved on the dial!

As she went with her taper up the stair,
How little her swollen eye was aware
  That the Shadow which follow'd was double!

Or when she closed her chamber door,
It was shutting out, and for evermore,
The world—and its worldly trouble.

Little she dreamt, as she laid aside
Her jewels—after one glance of pride—
They were solemn bequests to Vanity—
Or when her robes she began to doff,
That she stood so near to the putting off
Of the flesh that clothes humanity,

And when she quench'd the taper's light,
How little she thought as the smoke took flight,
That her day was done—and merged in a night
Of dreams and duration uncertain—
Or along with her own,
That a Hand of Bone
Was closing mortality's curtain!

But life is sweet, and mortality blind,
And youth is hopeful, and Fate is kind
In concealing the day of sorrow;
And enough is the present tense of toil—
For this world is, to all, a stiffish soil—
And the mind flies back with a glad recoil
From the debts not due till to-morrow. . . .

Thus, even thus, the Countess slept,
While Death still nearer and nearer crept,
Like the Thane who smote the sleeping—
But her mind was busy with early joys,
Her golden treasures and golden toys,
That flash'd a bright
And golden light
Under lids still red with weeping.

THE SONG OF THE SHIRT.

1843.

THOMAS HOOD.

WITH fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread—
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
She sang the "Song of the Shirt."

"Work! work! work!
While the cock is crowing aloof!
And work—work—work,
Till the stars shine through the roof!
It's Oh! to be a slave
Along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save,
If this is Christian work!

"Work—work—work
Till the brain begins to swim;
Work—work—work
Till the eyes are heavy and dim!
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
And sew them on in a dream!

"Oh, Men, with Sisters dear!
Oh, men, with Mothers and Wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out,
But human creatures' lives!
Stitch—stitch—stitch,
In poverty, hunger and dirt,
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
A Shroud as well as a Shirt.

"But why do I talk of Death?
That Phantom of grisly bone,
I hardly fear its terrible shape,
It seems so like my own—
It seems so like my own,
Because of the fasts I keep;
Oh, God! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap!

"Work—work—work!
My labour never flags;
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
A crust of bread—and rags.
That shatter'd roof—and this naked floor—
A table—a broken chair—
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
For sometimes falling there!

"Work—work—work!
From weary chime to chime,
Work—work—work—
As prisoners work for crime!
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumb'd,
As well as the weary hand.

"Work—work—work,
In the dull December light,
And work—work—work,
When the weather is warm and bright—
While underneath the eaves
The brooding swallows cling
As if to show me their sunny backs
And twit me with the spring.

"Oh! but to breathe the breath
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet—
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet,
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel;
Before I knew the woes of want
And the walk that costs a meal

"Oh! but for one short hour!
A respite however brief!
No blessed leisure for Love or Hope
But only time for Grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!"

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread—
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch,—
Would that its tone could reach the Rich!—
She sang this "Song of the Shirt!"

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

1844.

THOMAS HOOD.

ONE more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.—

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, or a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly,
Feelings had changed;
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light

From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurl'd—
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran,—
Over the brink of it,
Picture it—think of it,
Dissolute Man!
Lave in it—drink of it,
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently,—kindly,—
Smoothe, and compose them
And her eyes, close them
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurr'd by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest.—
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour!

THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

1844.

THOMAS HOOD.

(PART II.)

O, VERY gloomy is the House of Woe,
Where tears are falling while the bell is knelling
With all the dark solemnities which show
That Death is in the dwelling.

O very, very dreary is the room
Where Love, domestic Love, no longer nestles,
But, smitten by the common stroke of doom,
The Corpse lies on the trestles!

But House of Woe, and hearse, and sable pall,
The narrow home of the departed mortal,
Ne'er look'd so gloomy as that Ghostly Hall,
With its deserted portal!

The centipede along the threshold crept,
The cobweb hung across in mazy tangle,
And in its winding-sheet the maggot slept,
At every nook and angle.

The keyhole lodged the earwig and her brood,
The emmets of the steps had old possession,
And marched in search of their diurnal food
In undisturbed procession.

As undisturb'd as the prehensile cell
Of moth or maggot, or the spider's tissue,
For never foot upon that threshold fell,
To enter or to issue.

O'er all there hung the shadow of a fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is Haunted!

Howbeit, the door I push'd—or so I dream'd—
Which slowly, slowly gaped,—the hinges creaking
With such a rusty eloquence, it seemed
That Time himself was speaking.

But Time was dumb within that Mansion old,
Or left his tale to the heraldic banners,
That hung from the corroded walls, and told
Of former men and manners:—

Those tatter'd flags, that with the open'd door
Seem'd the old wave of battle to remember,
While fallen fragments danced upon the floor,
Like dead leaves in December.

The startled bats flew out,—bird after bird,
The screech-owl overhead began to flutter,
And seemed to mock the cry that she had heard
Some dying victim utter!

A shriek that echo'd from the joisted roof,
And up the stair, and further still and further,
Till in some ringing chamber far aloof
It ceased its tale of murther!

Meanwhile the rusty armour rattled round,
The banner shudder'd, and the ragged streamer;
All things the horrid tenor of the sound
Acknowledged with a tremor.

The antlers, where the helmet hung, and belt,
Stirr'd as the tempest stirs the forest branches,

Or as the stag had trembled when he felt
The blood-hound at his haunches.

The window jingled in its crumbled frame,
And thro' its many gaps of destitution
Dolorous moans and hollow sighings came,
Like those of dissolution.

The wood-louse dropped, and rolled into a ball
Touched by some impulse occult or mechanic;
And nameless beetles ran along the wall
In universal panic

The subtle spider, that from overheard
Hung like a spy on human guilt and error,
Suddenly turn'd and up its slender thread
Ran with a nimble terror.

The very stains and fractures on the wall
Assuming features solemn and terrific,
Hinted some Tragedy of that old Hall,
Lock'd up in hieroglyphic.

Some tale that might, perchance, have solved the doubt,
Wherefore amongst those flags so dull and livid,
The banner of the Bloody Hand shone out
So ominously vivid.

Some key to that inscrutable appeal,
Which made the very frame of Nature quiver;
And every thrilling nerve and fibre feel
So ague-like a shiver.

For over all there hung a cloud of fear;
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is Haunted!

If but a rat had linger'd in the house,
To lure the thought into a social channel!
But not a rat remain'd, or tiny mouse,
To squeak behind the panel.

Huge drops rolled down the walls, as if they wept;
And where the cricket used to chirp so shrilly,
The toad was squatting, and the lizard crept
On that damp hearth and chilly.

For years no cheerful blaze had sparkled there,
Or glanced on coat of buff or knightly metal;
The slug was crawling on the vacant chair,—
The snail upon the settle.

The floor was redolent of mould and must,
The fungus in the rotten seams had quicken'd;
While on the oaken table coats of dust
Perennially had thicken'd.

No mark of leathern jack or metal can,
No cup—no horn—no hospitable token,—
All social ties between that board and Man
Had long ago been broken.

There was so foul a rumour in the air,
The shadow of a presence so atrocious;
No human creature could have feasted there,
Even the most ferocious.

For over all there hung a cloud of fear,
A sense of mystery the spirit daunted,
And said, as plain as whisper in the ear,
The place is Haunted!

William Thom.

1798—1848.

The power and influence of Burns were never more happily demonstrated than by the large chorus of minor singers that awoke responsive to his song. It was as when a prophet of the groves, poised upon the topmost bough of the loftiest tree, catches the first glimpse of dawn, and pours forth his passion in a message all divine, awakening even the sparrows on the housetops to swell the universal hymn.

A man of the people singing for the people, and among them the Ayrshire ploughman, inspired the Ettrick shepherd and the Paisley weaver, and a hundred others who wrote words to the ringing tenor of the anvil, the booming bass of the loom. Probably no country has ever produced so many minor singers of genuine merit from its humbler classes as Scotland did during the earlier part of the nineteenth century, and these, too, very largely as a direct result of the power and influence of Burns.

William Thom, "the hapless bard of Ury," was one of those who traced a lineal descent of song, through Tannahill and Hogg to Burns. Born at Aberdeen towards the end of 1798 or the commencement of 1799, Thom became early acquainted with the sorrows and sufferings of the poor. While still an infant he was run over by the carriage of a nobleman, and so much injured that he became

lamed for life, an injury for which he was compensated by the gift of five shillings.

At once, as a record of his early experiences and an example of his remarkable and characteristic prose style, we may take the following note attached to his poem, "Old Father Frost," in his "Rhymes and Recollections":—

"Ere yet the schoolmaster was so much abroad, the schoolmistress was very much at home. In Aberdeen, about thirty years ago, at any of fifty lowly firesides, could be found one of those simple academies yclept a 'Wifie's Squeel.' In one of these was imparted to me all the tuition I ever received in the way of letters—gatherings in after-life being only 'crumbs from the rich man's table.' *Our* wifie had always twenty scholars, one cat, one *taurds*, and one opinion. The scholars exercised her patience, the cat her affections, and the opinion, simply that the *taurds* (a cordovan improvement on the feebler birch) was, as an exercise, the best panacea on earth for rheumatism in the right shoulder. When Elspet Gillespie wanted a bit of exercise in this way, there was no long waiting for a defaulter to give a duty-like interest to her emotions. The evolutions of the *taurds* then awakened some excitement throughout the establishment, accompanied by strong marks of disapproval in the party honoured by her immediate regard, and stirred curious sympathies even in those who sat byin safety—if, indeed, safety could be coupled with such an hour. When the pangs of rheumatism were lulled by a sense of weariness about the shoulder blade, Elspet resumed her proud elevation above the trembling assembly, who felt there was one great woman in the world, and there sat she. Boys five years old and upwards brought the fee of three 'bawbees' and a peat weekly. Our junior class was composed of little ones, who were too young to talk, but who, of course, made most noise. These were charged sixpence. I cannot say what portion of that sum was entered to 'din.' She had, indeed, much trouble with these, and longer time of it, having to tend them during the whole day until their poor mothers returned from the

spinning-mill or the field. The outfit for grown-up *students* was a Bible, a Westminster Catechism, and a stool, all of which were removed on Saturday, and fetched again on Monday. Oh, that I could tell, and tell it rightly, the 'skailing of the squeel,' or paint yon joyous little mob, gushing forth from the *laigh* door of Elspet Gillespie! Every face a commentary on 'the rights of man'—every little head crowned with a three-footed stool, its 'cap of liberty.' There they go—a living forest, less leafy, less orderly than the Birnam Wood that removed to Dunsinane. Thus should it be—this left a tyrant—that sought one."

Leaving school at ten years of age Thom was apprenticed to a firm of cotton manufacturers in the Lower Denburn, transferring his services, on the dissolution of the firm in 1814, to the School Hill Factory, which occupied the site now covered by the East and West Free Kirks.

"The garden of Gordon's Hospital," he writes, "lay close by our work, and was at the time open to all during every day. There was quietness there, though encircled by noisy streets. There of a summer day we would meet—those of us who had a turn for reading—and gossip over all we knew of books and the outer world. Then came glimpses,—the only glimpses afforded us of true, and natural, and rational existence. . . . The Wizard of Waverley had roused the world to wonders, and we wondered too. Byron was flinging around the terrible and beautiful of a distracted greatness. Moore was doing all he could for love-sick boys and girls,—yet they had never enough! Nearer and dearer to hearts like ours was the Ettrick Shepherd, then in his full tide of song and story; but nearer and dearer still than he, or any living songster—to us dearer—was our ill-fated fellow-craftsman Tannahill, who had just then taken himself from a neglecting world, while yet that world waxed mellow in his lay. Poor weaver chiel! What we owe to thee! Your 'Braes o' Balquidder,' and 'Yon Burnside,' and 'Gloomy Winter,' and the 'Minstrels' wailing ditty, and the noble 'Gleniffer.' Oh, how they did ring above the rattling of a hundred shuttles! Let me again proclaim the

debt we owe those Song-Spirits, as they walked in melody from loom to loom, ministering to the low-hearted ; and when the breast was filled with everything but hope and happiness, and all but seared, let only break forth the healthy and vigorous chorus, 'A man's a man for a' that,' the fagged weaver brightens up. His very shuttle *skytes* boldly along, and clatters through in faithful time to the tune of his merrier shopmates."

For seventeen years Thom remained a workman at the School Hill Factory. In 1831 he moved to Dundee in search of work, his wife leaving him and returning to Aberdeen. From Dundee he went to Newtyle, near Coupar Angus; but in the spring of 1837 "a commercial failure silenced in one week upwards of six thousand looms in Dundee, and spread dismay throughout the whole county of Forfar." Deserted by his wife, Thom had in the meantime taken to his heart and home Jean of the "deep dark eye," who became the mother of his four children, and whom he celebrates in both verse and prose. Nothing could be more touching than the record of their subsequent sufferings as preserved in the poet's "Recollections."

"Imagine a cold spring forenoon," he says. "It is eleven o'clock, but our little dwelling shows none of the signs of that time of day. The four children are still asleep. There is a bed-cover hung before the window, to keep all within as much like night as possible ; and the mother sits beside the beds of her children to lull them back to sleep whenever any shows an inclination to awake. For this there is a cause, for our weekly five shillings have not come as expected, and the only food in the house consists of a handful of oatmeal saved from the supper of last night. Our fuel also is exhausted. My wife and I were conversing in sunken whispers about making an attempt to cook the handful of meal, when the youngest child awoke beyond its mother's power to hush it again to sleep. Face after face sprang up, each with one consent exclaiming, 'Oh,

mither, mither, gie me a piece.' How weak a word is sorrow to apply to the feelings of myself and my wife during the remainder of that dreary forenoon!"

Thom proceeded to Dundee, where he pawned the "last and most valued relic of better days" for ten shillings, spending the principal part of it in furnishing "packs" for "Jean" and himself with a view to taking to the roads. Thus furnished they locked up the two idle looms in the old cottage, and gave up the key to the landlord. Starting on their "heartless pilgrimage" they left Newtile six in number, but a few days later little Jeanie, the weakest of the four children, died in an outhouse, in which the family had taken shelter for the night. With broken hearts they left her in an obscure corner of Kinnaird churchyard, and trudged on their weary way. Reaching Methven after having had the good fortune to sell a book to a stonebreaker at the road side for fivepence halfpenny, one halfpenny short of the required fee for lodgings, Thom determined on a new course of action, and beckoning his Jean to follow him, disclosed to her his determination to try his fortune with his flute on the outskirts of the village. Arriving opposite a house at the windows of which sat some well-dressed people, he would have made the attempt, but it was a new business and he was awkward at it. His bewildered look and hesitating movements, he tells us, attracted attention, but he lacked the courage to profit by it. "A quarter of an hour longer, said I," he writes, "and it will be darker; let us walk about a bit." "The sun had been down a good while and the gloamin' was lovely. In spite of everything I felt a momentary reprieve, I dipped my dry flute in a

little burn, and began to play. It rang sweetly amongst the trees. I moved on and on, still playing and still facing the town. 'The Flowers of the Forest' brought me before the house lately mentioned. My music raised one window after another, and in less than ten minutes put me in possession of three shillings and ninepence of good British money. I sent the mother home with this treasure, and directed her to send our little girl to me. It was by this time nearly dark. When I finally made my way and retired to my lodging it was with five shillings and sevenpence in addition."

After a year at Aberdeen he entered the employ of a "Customary," or household weaver, in the Garioch, and removed to Inverurie, where his bonny dark-eyed Jean died in childbirth. It was directly after this that he composed the verses that first attracted attention, and brought him fame. One of these poems, "The Blind Boy's Pranks," he sent to the Editor of the *Aberdeen Herald*, who inserted it with the accompanying note: "The following beautiful stanzas are by a correspondent who subscribes himself *a serf*, and declares he has to weave *fourteen hours out of the four-and-twenty*. We trust his *daily toil* will soon be abridged, that he may have more leisure to devote to an art in which he shows so much natural genius and cultured taste. February 1841." This note brought Thom two friends in need, George Galloway of Inverness, who sent him a small sum of money which was immediately turned into food, and Mr. Gordon of Knockespock, who sent him, through the Editor of the *Aberdeen Journal*, a five-pound note, followed by twenty pounds for an outfit. The tide in his

affairs had now turned. He visited London and made a number of new friends, returning to Aberdeen after a four months' holiday in the south. In 1844, mainly through the influence of Mr. Gordon, the "Rhymes and Recollections of a Handloom Weaver" were published. The first thousand sold rapidly, and Thom found himself the honoured guest at many a dinner and convivial party. A dinner was given in his honour on the 26th February, 1845, at the Crown and Anchor tavern in the Strand, where James Hogg had years before received a similar compliment, and William Johnson Fox presided. Admirers in India subscribed and sent him no less than £300, while others in America contributed as much as £400. The dinner was followed on the 8th April by a soiree given at the National Hall, High Holborn, by the working men of London, with Dr. Bowring at their head, and Fox again as one of the speakers. In spite of his popularity, however, the second edition of his book was only a very limited success. The poet's condition became now very precarious, his wilfulness and waywardness had alienated his patrons, and the sums of money subscribed for him in India and America had become exhausted. At this juncture, a grant from the Literary Fund was obtained for him, which, with private subscriptions made for the purpose, enabled him to return to Dundee. Here he settled at Hawkhill, where he had formerly worked at the loom. He met with a hearty reception at the hands of his fellow-townsmen, but "the zest of his life was quite gone." He died on the 29th February, 1848, and on the 3rd of March he was buried with public honours at a spot of his own choice in the Western Cemetery.

Mr. J. Forbes-Robertson, who was a lifelong friend of the poet, and who has done perhaps more than any one to secure his proper recognition and keep his memory green, points out the similarity of No. 1 of the "Blind Boy's Pranks," to the well-known ode of Anacreon "On Cupid," though the modern poet had no knowledge of the Greek and gave no evidence of having seen even a translation. After the "Blind Boy's Pranks," Mr. Robertson names "Autumn Winds," "Oh Mary, when you think of me," "They speak o' Wyles in Woman's Smiles," "Oh, let me gang," "Ye dinna ken yon Bower," "Oh, how can I be cheerie in this Hameless Ha'?" as full of the tenderest sentiment and up to the highest lyric mark. "Oh Mary! when you think of me" (p. 265) was composed for a comrade at the factory in Aberdeen, who "told his love" for Mary, a fellow-worker, through the poet, who records the fact that "Mary laughed." The man died a few weeks later, but was solaced in his last hours by the tender nursing of the woman he loved. "The ae dark spot in this loveless world" (p. 274) was written after the death of "Jean of the deep dark eye," and refers to the visit paid by the poet and his son to Betsey his daughter, ten years old, who was in service, to convey the sorrowful news. "Wake ye, Sleep ye" (p. 275) was composed after a visit to his son Willie, who had just undergone an operation at the Aberdeen Infirmary.

ALFRED H. MILES.

THE BLIND BOY'S PRANKS.

WILLIAM THOM.

I.

MEN grew sae cauld, maids sae unkind.
Love kentna whaur to stay.
Wi' fient an arrow, bow, or string,—
Wi' droopin' heart an' drizzled wing,
He faught his lanely way.

"Is there nae mair, in Garioch fair,
Ae spotless hame for me?
Hae politics, an' corn, an' kye,
Ilk bosom stappit? Fie, O fie!
I'll swithe me o'er the sea."

He launched a leaf o' jessamine,
On whilk he daured to swim,
An' pillowed his head on a wee rosebud,
Syne laithfu', lanely, Love 'gan scud
Down Ury's waefu' stream.

The birds sang bonnie as Love drew near,
But dowie when he gaed by;
Till lull'd wi' the sough o' monie a sang,
He sleepit fu' soun' and sailed alang
'Neath Heav'n's gowden sky!

'Twas just whaur creeping Ury greets
Its mountain cousin Don,
There wandered forth a weelfaur'd deme,
Wha listless gazed on the bonnie stream,
As it flirted an' played with a sunny beam
That flickered its bosom upon.

Love happit his head, I trow, that time,
The jessamine bark drew nigh,
The lassie espied the wee rosebud,
An' aye her heart gae thud for thud,
An' quiet it wadna lie.

"O gin I but had yon wearie wee flower
That floats on the Ury sae fair!"
She lootit her hand for the silly rose-leaf,
But little wist she o' the pawkie thief,
Was lurkin' an' laughin' there!

Love glower'd when he saw her bonnie dark e'e,
An' swore by Heaven's grace
He ne'er had seen, nor thought to see,
Since e'er he left the Paphian lea,
Sae lovely a dwallin' place!

Syne, first of a', in her blythesome breast,
He built a bower, I ween;
An' what did the waefu' devilick neist?
But kindled a gleam like the rosy east,
That sparkled frae baith her een.

An' then beneath ilk high e'e bree
He placed a quiver there;
His bow? What but her shinin brow?
An' O sic deadly strings he drew
Frae out her silken hair.

Guid be our guard! sic deeds waur deen,
Roun' a' our countrie then;
An' monie a hangin' lug was seen
'Mang farmers fat, an' lawyers lean,
An' herds o' common men!

II.

Love roam'd awa frae Uryside,
Wi' bow an' barbet keen,
Nor car'd a gowan whaur he gaed;
"Auld Scotland's mine, howe, heath, and glade,
And I'll trock *that* wi' nane.

"Yon Ury damsel's diamond e'e,
I've left it evermair;
She gied her heart unkent to me;
Now prees what wedded wichts maun pree,
When I'm *un*priested there.

"That time by Ury's glowing stream,
In sunny hour we met;
A lichter beild, a kinder hame
Than in the breast o' that fair dame,
I'll never, never get.

"I kenn'd her meet wi' kindly say,
A lov'd, a lowly name;
The heartless ruled poor Jean—an' they
Hae doom'd a loveless bride, for aye
To busk a loveless hame.

"I'll seek bauld Benachie's proud pow,
Grey king of common hills!
And try hoo bodies' hearts may lowe
Beneath thy shadeless, shaggy brow,
Whaur dance a hundred rills."

Now trampin' bits, now fleein' miles,
Frae aff the common road,
To keek at cadgers loupin' stiles,
Wha try the virtue an' the wiles
Of maidens lichtly shod.

He passed Pittodrie's haunted wood,
Whaur devils dwalt langsyne;
He heard the Ury's timid flood,
An' Gadie's heigh an' hurrit scud,
In playfu' sweetness twine.

An' there he saw (for Love has een,
Tho' whiles nae gleg at seein')
He saw an' kenn'd a kind auld frien',
Wha wander'd ghaistlike an' alane,
Forsaken, shunn'd, an' deein'.

Her looks ance gay as gleams o' gowd
Upon a silvery sea;
Now dark an' dowie as the cloud
That creeps awthart yon leafless wood,
In cauld December's e'e.

Hear ye the heartsick soun's that fa'
Frae lips that bless nae mair?
Like beildless birdies when they ca'
Frae wet, wee wing the batted snaw,
Her sang soughs o' despair.

SONG OF THE FORSAKEN.

My cheek is faded sair, love,
An' lichtless fa's my e'e;
My breast a' lane and bare, love,
Has aye a beild for thee.
My breast, though lane and bare
The hame o' cauld despair,
Yet ye've a dwallin' there,
A' darksome though it be.

Yon guarded roses glowin',
Its wha daur min't to pu'?
But aye the wee bit gowan
Ilk reckless hand may strew.
An' aye the wee, wee gowan,
Unsheltered, lanely growin',
Unkent, uncared its ruin,
Sae marklessly it grew.

An' am I left to rue, then,
Wha ne'er kent Love but thee;
An' gae a love as true, then,
As woman's heart can gie?
But can ye cauldly view,
A bosom burstin' fu'?
An' hae ye broken noo,
The heart ye *sought* frae me?

III.

By the lowe o' a lawyer's ingle bricht,
Wi' gruesome looks an' dark,
The Deil sat pickin' his thum's ae nicht
Frae evendoun want o' wark.
At length in the learn'd lug to hark
He cannilie screw'd him roun',
Syne claw'd his elbow an' leuch to mark
The lang-leaft buik brocht doun.

Wi' outshot een, o'er leaf an' line,
Sae keenly did they leuk,
An' oh! there was ae waefu' sign
Within that wearie buik,
Whan Hornie gae his mou a cruik
An' whisper'd, "Look ye, here's
A crafter carl upon our hook
Ahint these twa 'ha'f years.'

"Gae harry him, man, an' gar him dee,
The lave is your's an' mine;
His daisy dochter's scornfu' e'e
Will blink less saucy syne.
In beinless wa's just lat her pine,
Sic lanesome hardships pree;
An' here's my loof the haughty quean
Will fa' afore she flee."

Love heard, an' scunnert wi' the plot
Swore grey the very moon,
That he would hae the lawyer shot,
An' gar the deevil droun.
He flaft his wing o'er brae, an' boun'
O'er field and forest wide;
In lowly biggin lichted doun
An' knelt by Annie's side.

O, whaur is love maist lovely seen?
In timorous glances stealing—
Half-hid, half-own'd in diamond e'en
The soul-fraught look revealing?
No; see it there—a daughter kneeling
A father's sickbed near,
With uprais'd heart to heaven appealing,
That—*that's* the look for angel's wear!

Annie, sic look was thine that nicht,
Yon waesome watchfu' hour;
The man o' buiks thow'd at the sicht—
He tint a' pith an' pow'r.
Auld Hornie then forthwith 'gan scour
By heicht an' howe—an' then
At Cardin's brig he tumbl't o'er
An' never raise again.

The lanefu' lawyer held his breath,
An' word micht utter nane;
But lookit aye—grew aye mair laith
To blaud her bonnie een.
Love threw a shaft, sae sure an' keen,
It trembled in his heart;
An' micht I deem, altho' a stane
Had dwallin' in the part.

Syne, slow an' dowie, wending hame,
Wi' cares unkent afore,
His heart a' sinkin' doun wi' shame—
Wi' new love gushin' o'er.
By buik or bond he held nae store,
For bound eneuch was he;
Nor could he read aucht ither lore
Than beam'd in yon bricht e'e.

A saftness hangs on ilka word;
A wish on ilka hour;
A sang is soucht fra' every bird,
A sich frae every flower.
Now briefs forsaken, rot an' sour—
A sonnet rules a summons;
E'en Blackstone's weighty wit maun cour
To far mair weighty woman's.

LYRICS.

WILLIAM THOM.

I.—AUTUMN WINDS.

OH, ye waesome winds, hoo your mourning grieves,
Hoo your sighing an' moaning fear me!
As ye toss an' tear the trembling leaves
That ye cherished when *he* was near me.

I've kent ye woo them—I've heard ye woo,
As saftly as woman's lane sighing;
When ye slyly kissed the cozie dew
Frae their faulded bosoms lying.

Now nightly athwart the naked plain,
Ye are whirling the saucy snaw in;
Ye've changed the dew to the pelting rain,
Till your poor droukit leaves are fa'in.

Hae ye fausely strayed 'mang misty groves,
Wi' ice-wreathed maidens to marrow?
Oh, they've come an' slain your bonnie summer loves,
An' driven ye daft wi' sorrow!

But *my* love is true, ye winds that blaw,
And your fauseness maunna fear me;
His kind heart never will flit nor fa',
Nor own anither dearie.

There's ae green branch on yon blighted tree,
An' the lave a' darkly dwining;
There's ae bricht e'e looks love to me,
Like the weird licht o'er me shining.

Yet oh, ye winds, hoo your wailing grieves!
Hoo your sighing an' moaning fear me!
As ye toss an' tear the dowie grey leaves
That waur green, green, when he was near me.

II.—OH, MARY! WHEN YOU THINK OF ME.

OH, Mary! when you think of me,
Let pity hae its share, love;
Tho' others mock my misery,
Do you in mercy spare, love.
My heart, oh, Mary! own'd but thee,
And sought for thine so fervently;
The saddest tear e'er wet my e'e,
Ye ken *wha* brocht it there, love.

Oh, lookna wi' that witching look,
That wiled my peace awa', love!
An' dinna let me hear you sigh,
It tears my heart in twa, love!
Resume the frown ye wont to wear,
Nor shed the unavailing tear,
The hour of doom is drawing near,
An' welcome be its ca', love!

How could ye hide a thought sae kind,
  Beneath sae cauld a brow, love?
The broken heart it winna bind
  Wi' gowden bandage now, love.
    No, Mary! mark yon reckless shower!
    It hung aloof in scorching hour,
    An' helps nae now the feckless flower
    That sinks beneath its flow, love.

III.—THEY SPEAK O' WYLES.

THEY speak o' wyles in woman's smiles,
  An' ruin in her e'e—
I ken they bring a pang at whiles
  That's unco sair to dree;
But mind ye this, the half-ta'en kiss,
  The first fond fa'in' tear,
Is, Heaven kens, fu' sweet amends
  An' tints o' heaven here.

When twa leal hearts in fondness meet,
  Life's tempests howl in vain—
The very tears o' love are sweet
  When paid with tears again.
Shall sapless prudence shake its pow,
  Shall cauldrife caution fear?
Oh, dinna, dinna droun the lowe
  That lichts a heaven here!

What tho' we're ca'd a wee before
  The stale "three score an' ten;"
When "Joy" keeks kindly at your door,
  Aye bid her welcome ben.

About yon blissfu' bowers above
Let doubtfu' mortals speir,
Sae weel ken we that "Heaven is love"
Since love makes heaven here.

IV.—ONE OF THE HEART'S STRUGGLES.

"OH! let me gang, ye dinna ken
How sair my mither flate yestreen—
An', mournin' o'er and o'er again,
Speir'd whaur I gaed sae late at e'en.
An' aye I saw her dicht her een—
My very heart maist brak to see 't—
I'd byde a flyte though e'er sae keen,
But canna, canna thole her greet."

"Oh! blessin's guard my lassie's brow,
And fend her couthie heart frae care;
Her lowein' breast o' love sae fu'—
How can I grudge a mither's share?
The hinnysuckle's no sae fair,
In gloamin's dewy pearl weet,
As my love's e'e when tremblin' there
The tear that owns a mither's greet.

"A heart a' warmed to mither's love—
Oh! that's the heart whaur I wad be;
An' when a mither's lips reprove,
Oh! gie me then the glist'nin' e'e.
For feckless fa's that look on me,
Howe'er sae feigned in cunnin's sweet—
And loveless—luckless—is the e'e
That, tearless, kens a mither greet."

V.—YE DINNA KEN YON BOWER.

YE dinna ken yon bower,
Frae the glow'rin warl' hidden,
Ye maunna ken yon bower
Bonnie in the gloamin'.
Nae woodbine sheds a fragrance there,
Nae rose, nae daffodillie fair;
But, oh! yon flow'r beyond compare
That blossoms in the gloamin.

There's little licht in yon bower,
Day and darkness elbow ither,
That's the licht in yon bower,
Bonnie in the gloamin'.
Awa' ye sun, wi' lavish licht,
And bid brown Benachie guid nicht;
To me a star mair dearly bricht
Aye glimmers in the gloamin'.

There's nae a sound in yon bower,
Merl's sough nor mavis singin';
Whispers saft in yon bower,
Mingle in the gloamin'.
What though drowsie lav'rocks rest,
Cow'rin' in their sangless nest?
When, oh! the voice that I like best
Cheers me in the gloamin'.

There's artless truth in yon bower,
Sweeter than the scented blossom;
Bindin' hearts in yon bower,
Glowin' in the gloamin'.

The freshness o' the upland lea,
The fragrance o' the blossom'd pea,
A' mingle in her breath to me,
Sichin' in the gloamin'

CONCLUDING CHORUS.

Then haud awa' frae yon bower,
Cauldrife breast or loveless bosom;
True love dwells in yon bower,
Gladdest in the gloamin'.

VI.—DID THEY MEET AGAIN?

AWA' ye weary licht,
Nae moon nor starnie bricht;
Oh! for thy midwatch nicht
An' rayless hour;
Whan I may gang alane,
Unmarked by mortal een,
An' meet my bosom queen
In her murky bower.

I ken she's waitin' there—
She's faithfu' as she's fair—
I'll twine her raven hair
Roun' her snawie brow;
An' vow by earth an' sea,
Hoo dear she's been to me,
An' thou lone Benachie
Maun hear that vow.

We loved—alas!—sae leal!
But this sad nicht maun seal
The lang—the last fareweel
'Tween her an' me.

Whaure'er my fate may guide,
Or weel or wae betide,
I'll mind wha dwalls beside
Dark Benachie.

VII.—MY HAMELESS HA'.

OH! how can I be cheerie in this hameless ha'?
The very sun glints eerie on the gilded wa';
An' aye the nicht sae drearie,
Ere the dowie morn daw,
Whan I canna win to see you
My Jamie ava.

Tho' monie miles between us, an' far, far frae me,
The bush that wont to screen us frae the cauld warl's e'e,
Its leaves may waste and wither,
But its branches winna fa';
An' hearts may haud thegither,
Tho' frien's drap awa'.

Ye promis'd to speak o' me to the lanesome moon,
An' weird kind wishes to me, in the lark's saft soun';
I doat upon that moon,
Till my very heart fills fu';
An' aye yon birdie's tune
Gars me greet for you.

Then how can I be cheerie in the stranger's ha'?
A gowden prison drearie, my luckless fa'!
'Tween leavin' o' you, Jamie,
An' ills that sorrow me
I'm wearie o' the warl'
An' carena though I dee.

VIII.—THE WEDDED WATERS.

GADIE wi' its waters fleet,
Ury wi' its murmur sweet,
They hae trysted aye to meet
Among the woods o' Logie.

Like bride an' bridegroom happy they,
Wooing smiles frae bank an' brae,
Their wedded waters wind an' play
Round leafy bowers at Logie.

O'er brashy linn, o'er meadow fine,
They never sinder, never tyne,
An' oh! I thought sic meetings mine,
Yon happy hours at Logie!

But Fortune's cauld an' changefu' e'e,
Gloomed bitterly on mine an' me,
I looket syne, but cou'dna see
My *sworn* love at Logie.

Now lowly, lanely, I may rue
The guilefu' look, the guilefu' vow,
That fled as flees the feckless dew
Frae withered leaves at Logie.

But Gadie wi' its torrents keen,
An' Ury wi' its braes sae green,
They a' can tell how true I've been
To my lost love in Logie.

IX.—WHISPER LOW.

SLOWLY, slowly the cauld moon creeps
Wi' a licht unlo'esome to see;
It dwalls on the window whaur my love sleeps,
An' she winna wauken to me.
Wearie, wearie the hours, and slow,
Wauken, my lovie, an' whisper low!

There's nae ae sang in heaven's hicht,
Nor on the green earth doun,
Like soun's that kind love kens at nicht,
When whispers hap the soun';
Hearin'—fearin'—sichin' so—
Whisper, my bonnie lovie, whisper low!

They lack nae licht wha weel can speak
In love's ain wordless wile;
Her ee-bree creepin' on my cheek
Betrays her pawkie smile;
Happy—happy—silent so—
Breathin'—bonnie lovie, whisper low!

Was yon a waft o' her wee white han',
Wi' a warnin' "wheesht" to me?
Or was it a gleam o' that fause moon fa'in'
On my puir misguided e'e?
Wearie—wearie—wearie O—
Wauken, my lovie, an' whisper low!

POEMS.

WILLIAM THOM.

I.—THE MITHERLESS BAIRN.

WHEN a' ither bairnies are hushed to their hame,
By aunty, or cousin, or frecky grand-dame;
Wha stan's last an' lanely, an' naebody carin'?
'Tis the puir doited loonie—the mitherless bairn!

The mitherless bairn gangs till his lane bed,
Nane covers his cauld back, or haps his bare head;
His wee, hackit heelies are hard as the airn,
An litheless the lair o' the mitherless bairn!

Aneath his cauld brow, siccan dreams tremble there,
O' hands that wont kindly to kame his dark hair!
But mornin' brings clutches, a' reckless an' stern,
That lo'e nae the locks o' the mitherless bairn!

Yon sister, that sang o'er his saftly-rocked bed,
Now rests in the mools whaur her mammie is laid;
The father toils sair their wee bannock to earn,
An' kens nae the wrangs o' his mitherless bairn!

Her spirit, that pass'd in yon hour o' his birth,
Still watches his wearisome wand'rings on earth,
Recording in heaven the blessings they earn,
Wha couthilie deal wi' the mitherless bairn!

Oh! speak him nae harshly—he trembles the while—
He bends to your bidding, and blesses your smile!
In their dark hour o' anguish, the heartless shall learn
That God deals the blow for the mitherless bairn!

II.—THE AE DARK SPOT.

THE ae dark spot in this loveless world,
That spot maun ever be, Willie,
Whaur she sat an' dauted your bonnie brown hair,
An' lithely looket to me, Willie;
An' oh! my heart owned a' the power
Of your mither's gifted e'e, Willie.

There's now nae blink at our slacken'd hearth,
Nor kindred breathing there, Willie;
But cauld and still our hame of Death,
Wi' its darkness evermair, Willie;
For she wha lived in our love, is cauld,
An' her grave the stranger's lair, Willie.

The sleepless nicht, the dowie dawn,
A' stormy though it be, Willie,
Ye'll buckle ye in your weet wee plaid,
An' wander awa wi' me, Willie;
Your lanesome sister little kens,
Sic tidings we hae to gie, Willie.

The promised day, the trysted hour
She'll strain her watchfu' e'e, Willie;
Seeking that mither's look of love,
She never again maun see, Willie;
Kiss ye the tear frae her whitening cheek,
An' speak awhile for me, Willie.

Look kindly, kindly when ye meet,
But speak nae of the dead, Willie;
An' when your heart would gar you greet,
Aye turn awa' your head, Willie;
That waesome look ye look to me
Would gar her young heart bleed, Willie.

Whane'er she names a mither's name,
An' sairly presseth thee, Willie,
Oh! tell her of a happy hame
Far, far o'er earth an' sea, Willie;
An' ane that waits to welcome them,
Her hameless bairns, an' me, Willie.

III.—WAKE YE, SLEEP YE.

WAKE ye, sleep ye, my hapless boy,
In this homeless house of care?
Lack ye the warmth of a mother's eye
On thy *cauldrife* lonely lair?

Dost thou clasp in thy dream a brother's hand,
Yet waken thee all alone?
Thy deep dark eye, does it open unblest?
Nor father?—nor sister? None!

Thy father's board is too narrow, my child,
For ills like thine to be there;
The comfortless hearth of thy parent is cold,
And his light but the light of despair.

Has God disown'd them, the children of toil?
Is the promise of Heaven no more?
Shall Industry weep?—shall the pamper'd suppress
The sweat-earned bread of the poor?

Alas! and the wind as it blew and blew
On the famished and houseless then,
Has blighted the bud of my heart's best hope,
And it never may blossom again.

IV.—THE DRUNKARD'S DREAM.

OH, tempt me not to the drunkard's draught,
With its soul-consuming gleam!
Oh, hide me from the woes that waft
Around the drunkard's dream!

When night in holy silence brings
The God-willed hour of sleep,
Then, then the red-eyed revel swings
Its bowl of poison deep!

When morning waves its golden hair,
And smiles o'er hill and lea,
One sick'ning ray is doomed to glare
On yon rude revelry!

The rocket's flary moment sped,
Sinks black'ning back to earth;
Yet darker—deeper sinks his head
Who shares the drunkard's mirth!

Know ye the sleep the drunkard knows?
That sleep, oh, who may tell?
Or who can speak the fiendful throes
Of his self-heated hell?

The soul all reft of heav'nly mark—
Defaced God's image there—
Rolls down and down yon abyss dark,
Thy howling home, Despair!

Or bedded his head on broken hearts,
Where slimy reptiles creep;
And the ball-less eye of Death still darts
Black fire on the drunkard's sleep!

And lo! their coffin'd bosoms rife,
That bled in his ruin wild!
The cold, cold lips of his shrouded wife,
Press lips of his shrouded child!

So fast—so deep the hold they keep!
Hark! that unhallow'd scream;
Guard us, oh God! from the drunkard's sleep—
From the drunkard's demon-dream!

Lord Macaulay.

1800—1859.

If the boys of England could be polled as to their favourite poet, Sir Walter Scott and Lord Macaulay would doubtless divide the honours, and if the favourite poem were in question, "Horatius" would probably be voted first. Each period of life and every cast of mind may be said to have its poet, and while the highest place belongs to him who is the exponent of the loftiest minds in their loftiest moods, it is no small honour to be the chosen bard of buoyant, hopeful, heroic, and withal, uncompromising youth.

But schoolboys are not the only admirers of the "Lays of Ancient Rome." They appeal with a resistless force to all who love the heroic in thought and action. The delicate Elizabeth Barrett attested the fiery ardour of their martial tone, and declared that she could scarcely read them and keep lying down. "They seemed," she said, in a letter to Horne, "to draw me up to my feet as the mesmeric powers are said to do." This is high tribute from a lofty source, and should find a responsive throb of sympathy in every heart that leaps at the manly and chivalrous in song.

Thomas Babington Macaulay was born at the seat of his uncle, Rothley Temple, Leicestershire, October 25th, 1800, little more than two months before the

birth of the century he was destined to adorn. His father was Zachary Macaulay, the associate of Wilberforce in the Anti-Slavery movement, and his mother, Selina Mills (Macaulay), the daughter of a Bristol merchant. Young Macaulay was from his earliest years a prodigy, exciting the admiration of Hannah More and other people of note, who visited his father's house, but unlike other prodigies he lived to more than fulfil the brilliant promise of his childhood. Born of one of the wisest of mothers he was effectually screened from the evil consequences of the flattery his extraordinary powers evoked, while he was as wisely corrected and stimulated in the exercise of his remarkable gifts. It has been given to many mothers to love as dearly, but to how few to deal as wisely with marked precocity as did Selina Macaulay with her little genius of twelve years old. "I know," she wrote him, while at school at this time, "you write with great ease to yourself, and would rather write ten poems than prune one. All your pieces are much mended after a little reflection ; therefore take your solitary walks and think over each separate thing. Spare no time or trouble, and render each piece as perfect as you can, and then leave the event without one anxious thought. I have always admired a saying of one of the old heathen philosophers, when a friend was condoling with him that he so well deserved of the gods, and yet they did not shower their favours on him as on some others less worthy, he answered, 'I will continue to deserve much of them.' So do you, my dearest."

From a private school at Shelford near Cambridge he passed as a commoner, in October 1818, to Trinity

College, in the neighbouring University, where he won the Craven Scholarship, becoming a Fellow on his third and final attempt in 1824. He won his literary spurs by articles in *Knight's Quarterly Magazine* and contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*, in which the famous essay on Milton appeared in August 1825. In 1826 he was called to the bar, and in 1828 appointed by Lord Lyndhurst a Commissioner in Bankruptcy. 1830 saw him returned to Parliament for the Borough of Calne, when he made his mark by his speeches on the Reform Bill. In 1834 he occupied an appointment as a member of the Supreme Indian Council at Calcutta, where he remained until 1838. Here, as President of the Commission appointed for the purpose, he drew up the draft of what became the Indian Penal Code. His Indian experience bore literary result in his brilliant essays on "Clive" and "Warren Hastings." Returning to England (1838), he became member for Edinburgh, and in 1839 Secretary of State for War, with a seat in the Cabinet of Lord Melbourne. On the fall of the Government, he devoted himself to historical studies, made up his mind to write his "History of England," and in 1843 published his "Lays of Ancient Rome." On the return of the Whigs to power in 1846, he accepted the office of Paymaster, which did not involve him in serious labour; but losing his seat for Edinburgh in 1847, his "History" became the great concern of his life. In December 1848, the first two volumes were published with a success which was phenomenal, and which placed him in a position of affluence. In 1852, he was, without seeking it, again returned for Edinburgh, at the top of the poll, but he never resumed an active

part in politics. The third and fourth volumes of his History followed in 1855, and in 1857 he was raised to the peerage. The disease of the heart, from which he suffered, now troubled him more and more; and on December 28th, 1859, he died, full of honours. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

The "Lays of Ancient Rome," with which we have specially to do at this present, were, as already indicated, published in 1843; "The Battle of Naseby," "Ivry," and "The Armada," and other short pieces had appeared before, but they were thrown off with apparently little effort. The "Lays," which were a distinct bid for poetic fame, were written with the most deliberate and scrupulous care. "Horatius" was partly written while on a visit to Italy, and two of the "Lays" written in India were submitted to Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, who highly approved them. The public received them with enthusiasm, eighteen thousand copies were sold in the first ten years, forty thousand in twenty years, and by June 1875 upwards of a hundred thousand copies had passed into the hands of readers.

For a prose writer to issue a volume of verse is to excite the special vigilance of the critics; and Macaulay's poetic merits and failings have been freely canvassed. Like his predecessor, Sir Walter Scott, he has been denied the gift of the poetic faculty altogether; and those merits, which it is impossible to deny him, have been far too grudgingly allowed.

Elizabeth Barrett, in the letter already quoted says, "he (Macaulay) has a noble, clear, metallic note in his soul, and makes us ready by it for battle;" and "the metallic note" is conceded, but it

is said to represent "the evil element in his mind." "His ballads," says Mr. Humphry Ward, "have the clear resonance of the trumpet; they have its harshness too." But, admitting this, what other instrument in all music is qualified to give the prevailing tone to songs of war? The shepherd's pipe may give sweeter notes, and the minstrel's harp may fittingly accompany his recital of heroic deeds. But the trumpet, with all its harshness, if not because of it, is the most fitting mouthpiece for the brazen throat of war. The keen asperity of the north-east wind makes the cheeks tingle, while it prepares the face for the afterglow, and the sting of the trumpet is followed by a quickened pulse and a stimulated enthusiasm. How much of this "metallic note" is the necessary accompaniment of the clang of armour and the ring of arms? Surely the trumpet quality is peculiarly appropriate to the records of Roman warfare.

Macaulay was a master of prosody, and had a thorough command over the instrument of thyme. His versification is without flaw, though it is said to lack the spontaneous variety which avoids monotony. It displays a vigour and vividness which command both eye and ear, and which is maintained without any sacrifice of form.

His verse at its best is so far an advance on his prose in that he depends for his effects, not upon high sounding phrases, but upon simple truth spoken in plain, straightforward words. It would be difficult to find better examples of the power of simple words and plain facts than may be found in many of the stanzas of "Horatius." "There is," says Mr. Morrison, "a directness of presentation

in his best passages, the poetical result is so independent of any artifice of language, or laboured pomp of diction, but on the contrary, arises so naturally from mere accuracy of drawing and clear vision of the fact, that the question is not whether his work is good, but whether in its kind it has often been surpassed."

Compared with other war poets Macaulay, as Mr. Morrison points out, has distinctive characteristics which are eminently to his advantage. Following in the line of Scott, he carries us to a higher level by the addition of moral force to manly prowess, of noble motive to heroic action. His inspiration was no mere wild spirit that delighted in fighting for fighting's sake, but rather the calmly ordered enthusiasm which grows out of a strong conviction for a righteous cause. This, which was eminently characteristic of the man, tells largely in favour of his verse.

Noble, fearless, generous, and like Sir Walter Scott without a particle of envy, his heroes were men after his own heart. Whatever posterity may say of him as a poet, it will probably agree that in writing "Horatius" he produced the most brilliant ballad of the century.

ALFRED H. MILES.

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY.

(BY OBADIAH BIND-THEIR-KINGS-IN-CHAINS-AND-THEIR-NOBLES-WITH-LINKS-OF-IRON, SERGEANT IN IRETON'S REGIMENT.)

1824.

LORD MACAULAY.

OH! wherefore come ye forth, in triumph from the North,
With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment all red?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous shout?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press which ye tread?

Oh evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sate in the high places, and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance, and their cuirasses shine,
And the Man of Blood was there, with his long essenced hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his Bible and his sword,
The General rode along us to form us to the fight,
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swelled into a shout
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line!
For God! for the Cause! for the Church! for the Laws!
For Charles King of England, and Rupert of the Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his drums,
His bravoes of Alsatia, and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks. Grasp your pikes, close your ranks;
For Rupert never comes but to conquer or to fall.

They are here! They rush on! We are broken! We are gone!
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.
O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back, in God's name, and fight it to the last.

Stout Skippon hath a wound, the centre hath given ground :
Hark ! hark !—what means the trampling of horsemen on our rear ?
Whose banner do I see, boys ? 'Tis he, thank God, 'tis he, boys.
Bear up another minute : brave Oliver is here.

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row,
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the dykes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the Accurst,
And at a shock have scattered the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestined to rot on Temple Bar :
And he—he turns, he flies :—shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on war !

Ho ! comrades, scour the plain ; and, ere ye strip the slain,
First give another stab to make your search secure,
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-pieces and lockets,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts were gay and bold,
When you kissed your lily hands to your lemans to-day;
And to-morrow shall the fox, from her chambers in the rocks,
Send forth her tawny cubs to howl above the prey.

Where be your tongues that late mocked at heaven and hell and fate,
And the fingers that once were so busy with your blades,
Your perfumed satin clothes, your catches and your oaths,
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and your spades?

Down, down, for ever down with the mitre and the crown,
With the Belial of the Court, and the Mammon of the Pope;
There is woe in Oxford Halls: there is wail in Durham's Stalls:
The Jesuit smites his bosom: the Bishop rends his cope.

And She of the seven hills shall mourn her children's ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's sword;
And the Kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses and the Word.

THE ARMADA.

A Fragment.

1832.

LORD MACAULAY.

ATTEND, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise;
I tell of the thrice-famous deeds she wrought in ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.
It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to Plymouth Bay;
Her crew had seen Castile's black fleet, beyond Aurigny's Isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many a mile.
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial grace;
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close in chase.
Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the wall;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgecumbe's lofty hall;
Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the coast,
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post.
With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff comes;
Behind him march the halberdiers; before him sound the drums;
His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample space;

For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her Grace.
And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance the bells,
As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon swells.
Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his ancient crown,
And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies down.
So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed Picard field,
Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Cæsar's eagle shield.
So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to bay,
And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely hunters lay.
Ho! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight: ho! scatter flowers, fair maids:
Ho! gunners, fire a loud salute: ho! gallants, draw your blades:
Thou sun, shine on her joyously; ye breezes waft her wide;
Our glorious SEMPER EADEM, the banner of our pride.
The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's massy fold;
The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll of gold;
Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the purple sea,
Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again shall be
From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to Milford Bay,
That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day;
For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-flame spread,
High on St. Michael's Mount it shone: it shone on Beachy Head.

Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern shire,
Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling points of fire.
The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering waves:
The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's sunless caves:
O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the fiery herald flew:
He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers of Beaulieu.
Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out from Bristol town,
And ere the day three hundred horse had met on Clifton down;
The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the night,
And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of blood-red light,
Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the death-like silence broke,
And with one start, and with one cry, the royal city woke.
At once on all her stately gates arose the answering fires;
At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling spires;
From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the voice of fear;
And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a louder cheer:
And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of hurrying feet,
And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down each roaring street;
And broader still became the blaze, and louder still the din,
As fast from every village round the horse came spurring in:

And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the warlike errand went,
And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires of Kent.
Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those bright couriers forth;
High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started for the north;
And on, and on, without a pause, untired they bounded still:
All night from tower to tower they sprang; they sprang from hill to hill:
Till the proud peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's rocky dales,
Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills of Wales,
Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's lonely height,
Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's crest of light,
Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's stately fane,
And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the boundless plain;
Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of Trent;
Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's embattled pile,
And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle.

LAYS OF ANCIENT ROME.

LORD MACAULAY.

HORATIUS.

A LAY MADE ABOUT THE YEAR OF THE CITY CCCLX.

LARS PORSENA of Clusium
By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
And named a trysting day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west and south and north,
To summon his array.

East and west and south and north
The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
Is on the march for Rome.

The horsemen and the footmen
Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place;
From many a fruitful plain;
From many a lonely hamlet,
Which, hid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest, hangs on the crest
Of purple Apennine;

From lordly Volaterræ,
Where scowls the far-famed hold
Piled by the hands of giants
For godlike kings of old;
From seagirt Populonia,
Whose sentinels descry
Sardinia's snowy mountain-tops
Fringing the southern sky;

From the proud mart of Pisæ,
Queen of the western waves,
Where ride Massilia's triremes
Heavy with fair-haired slaves;
From where sweet Clanis wanders
Through corn and vines and flowers;
From where Cortona lifts to heaven
Her diadem of towers.

Tall are the oaks whose acorns
Drop in dark Auser's rill;
Fat are the stags that champ the boughs
Of the Ciminian hill;
Beyond all streams Clitumnus
Is to the herdsman dear;
Best of all pools the fowler loves
The great Volscinian mere.

But now no stroke of woodman
Is heard by Auser's rill;
No hunter tracks the stag's green path
Up the Ciminian hill;
Unwatched along Clitumnus
Grazes the milk-white steer;
Unharmed the water fowl may dip
In the Volscinian mere.

The harvests of Arretium,
This year, old men shall reap,
This year, young boys in Umbro
Shall plunge the struggling sheep;
And in the vats of Luna,
This year, the must shall foam
Round the white feet of laughing girls
Whose sires have marched to Rome.

There be thirty chosen prophets,
The wisest of the land,
Who alway by Lars Porsena
Both morn and evening stand:
Evening and morn the Thirty
Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white
By mighty seers of yore.

And with one voice the Thirty
Have their glad answer given:
"Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena;
Go forth, beloved of Heaven;
Go, and return in glory
To Clusium's royal dome;
And hang round Nuscia's altars
The golden shields of Rome."

And now hath every city
Sent up her tale of men;
The foot are fourscore thousand,
The horse are thousands ten:
Before the gates of Sutrium
Is met the great array.
A proud man was Lars Porsena
Upon the trysting day.

For all the Etruscan armies
  Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
  And many a stout ally;
And with a mighty following
  To join the muster came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
  Prince of the Latian name.

But by the yellow Tiber
  Was tumult and affright:
From all the spacious champaign
  To Rome men took their flight.
A mile around the city,
  The throng stopped up the ways;
A fearful sight it was to see
  Through two long nights and days.

For aged folks on crutches,
  And women great with child,
And mothers sobbing over babes
  That clung to them and smiled.
And sick men borne in litters
  High on the necks of slaves,
And troops of sun-burned husbandmen
  With reaping-hooks and staves,

And droves of mules and asses
  Laden with skins of wine,
And endless flocks of goats and sheep,
  And endless herds of kine,
And endless trains of waggons
  That creaked beneath the weight
Of corn-sacks and of household goods,
  Choked every roaring gate.

Now, from the rock Tarpeian,
  Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
  Red in the midnight sky.
The Fathers of the City,
  They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came
  With tidings of dismay.

To eastward and to westward
  Have spread the Tuscan bands;
Nor house, nor fence, nor dovecote
  In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
  Hath wasted all the plain;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
  And the stout guards are slain.

I wis, in all the Senate,
  There was no heart so bold,
But sore it ached and fast it beat,
  When that ill news was told;
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
  Up rose the Fathers all,
In haste they girded up their gowns,
  And hied them to the wall.

They held a council standing
  Before the River-Gate;
Short time was there, ye may well guess,
  For musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly:
  "The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
  Nought else can save the town."

Just then a scout came flying,
All wild with haste and fear;
"To arms! to arms! Sir Consul:
Lars Porsena is here."
On the low hills to westward
The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
Rise fast along the sky.

And nearer fast and nearer
Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still and still more loud,
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpet's war-note proud,
The trampling, and the hum.
And plainly and more plainly
Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
The long array of spears.

And plainly and more plainly,
Above that glimmering line,
Now might ye see the banners
Of twelve fair cities shine;
But the banner of proud Clusium
Was highest of them all,
The terror of the Umbrian,
The terror of the Gaul.

And plainly and more plainly
Now might the burghers know,
By port and vest, by horse and crest,
Each warlike Lucumo.

There Cilnius of Arretium
On his fleet roan was seen;
And Astur of the four-fold shield,
Girt with the brand none else may wield,
Tolumnius with the belt of gold,
And dark Verbenna from the hold
By reedy Thrasymene.

Fast by the royal standard
O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
Sat in his ivory car,
By the right wheel rode Mamilius,
Prince of the Latian name;
And by the left false Sextus,
That wrought the deed of shame.

But when the face of Sextus
Was seen among the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
From all the town arose.
On the house-tops was no woman
But spat towards him and hissed,
No child but screamed out curses,
And shook its little fist.

But the Consul's brow was sad,
And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall
And darkly at the foe.
"Their van will be upon us
Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge
What hope to save the town?"

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
"To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his Gods,

"And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,
To save them from false Sextus
That wrought the deed of shame?

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?"

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
"I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee."

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
"As thou sayest, so let it be."
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

Then none was for a party;
Then all were for the state;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great:
Then lands were fairly portioned;
Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

Now Roman is to Roman
More hateful than a foe,
And the Tribunes beard the high,
And the Fathers grind the low.
As we wax hot in faction,
In battle we wax cold:
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
In the brave days of old.

Now while the Three were tightening
Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
To take in hand an axe:
And Fathers mixed with Commons
Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below.

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host, with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless Three.

The Three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose:
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields and flew
To win the narrow way;

Aunus from green Tifernum,
Lord of the Hill of Vines;
And Seius, whose eight hundred slaves
Sicken in Ilva's mines;
And Picus, long to Clusium
Vassal in peace and war,
Who led to fight his Umbrian powers
From that grey crag where, girt with towers,
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar.

Stout Lartius hurled down Aunus
Into the stream beneath:

Herminius struck at Seius,
And clove him to the teeth:
At Picus brave Horatius
Darted one fiery thrust;
And the proud Umbrian's gilded arms
Clashed in the bloody dust.

Then Ocnus of Falerii
Rushed on the Roman Three;
And Lausulus of Urgo,
The rover of the sea;
And Aruns of Volsinium,
Who slew the great wild boar,
The great wild boar that had his den
Amidst the reeds of Cosa's fen,
And wasted fields, and slaughtered men,
Along Albinia's shore.

Herminius smote down Aruns:
Lartius laid Ocnus low:
Right to the heart of Lausulus
Horatius sent a blow.
"Lie there," he cried, "fell pirate!
No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's walls the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark.
No more Campania's hinds shall fly
To woods and caverns when they spy
Thy thrice accursed sail."

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes.
A wild and wrathful clamour
From all the vanguard rose.

Six spears' lengths from the entrance
Halted that deep array,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow way.

But hark! the cry is Astur:
And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great Lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.
Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

He smiled on those bold Romans
A smile serene and high;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, "The she-wolf's litter
Stand savagely at bay:
But will ye dare to follow,
If Astur clears the way?"

Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh:
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

He reeled, and on Herminius
He leaned one breathing-space,
Then, like a wild cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face;
Through teeth, and skull, and helmet
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a hand-breadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head.

And the great Lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Alvernus
A thunder-smitten oak.
Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gaze on the blasted head.

On Astur's throat Horatius
Right firmly pressed his heel,
And thrice and four times tugged amain,
Ere he wrenched out the steel.
"And see," he cried, "the welcome,
Fair guests, that waits you here!
What noble Lucumo comes next
To taste our Roman cheer?"

But at his haughty challenge
A sullen murmur ran,
Mingled of wrath, and shame, and dread,
Along that glittering van.
There lacked not men of prowess,
Nor men of lordly race;
For all Etruria's noblest
Were round the fatal place.

But all Etruria's noblest
  Felt their hearts sink to see
On the earth the bloody corpses,
  In the path the dauntless Three:
And, from the ghastly entrance
  Where those bold Romans stood,
All shrank, like boys who unaware,
Ranging the woods to start a hare,
Come to the mouth of the dark lair
Where, growling low, a fierce old bear
  Lies amidst bones and blood.

Was none who would be foremost
  To lead such dire attack:
But those behind cried "Forward!'
  And those before cried "Back "
And backward now and forward
  Wavers the deep array;
And on the tossing sea of steel,
To and fro the standards reel
And the victorious trumpet-pea
  Dies fitfully away.

Yet one man for one moment
  Stood out before the crowd;
Well known was he to all the Three,
  And they gave him greeting loud
"Now welcome, welcome, Sextus!
  Now welcome to thy home
Why dost thou stay, and turn away
  Here lies the road to Rome."

Thrice looked he at the city;
  Thrice looked he at the dead;
And thrice came on in fury,
  And thrice turned back in dread:

And, white with fear and hatred,
Scowled at the narrow way
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood,
The bravest Tuscans lay.

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
"Come back, come back, Horatius!"
Loud cried the Fathers all.
"Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
Back, ere the ruin fall!"

Back darted Spurius Lartius;
Herminius darted back:
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more.

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream:
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

And, like a horse unbroken
When first he feels the rein,
The furious river struggled hard,
And tossed his tawny mane,

And burst the curb, and bounded,
Rejoicing to be free,
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
Rushed headlong to the sea.

Alone stood brave Horatius,
But constant still in mind;
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
And the broad flood behind.
"Down with him!" cried false Sextus,
With a smile on his pale face.
"Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena,
"Now yield thee to our grace."

Round turned he, as not deigning
Those craven ranks to see;
Nought spake he to Lars Porsena,
To Sextus nought spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of Rome

"O, Tiber! father Tiber!
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Take thou in charge this day!"
So he spake, and speaking sheathed
The good sword by his side,
And with his harness on his back,
Plunged headlong in the tide.

No sound of joy or sorrow
Was heard from either bank;
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,

Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

But fiercely ran the current,
Swollen high by months of rain:
And fast his blood was flowing;
And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armour,
And spent with changing blows:
And oft they thought him sinking,
But still again he rose.

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
Safe to the landing place:
But his limbs were borne up bravely
By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
Bore bravely up his chin.

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus;
"Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay ere close of day
We should have sacked the town!"
"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena,
"And bring him safe to shore
For such a gallant feat of arms
Was never seen before."

And now he feels the bottom;
Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
To press his gory hands;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate,
Borne by the joyous crowd.

They gave him of the corn-land,
That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
Could plough from morn till night;
And they made a molten image,
And set it up on high,
And there it stands unto this day
To witness if I lie.

It stands in the Comitium,
Plain for all folk to see;
Horatius in his harness,
Halting upon one knee:
And underneath is written,
In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

And still his name sounds stirring
Unto the men of Rome,
As the trumpet-blast that cries to them
To charge the Volscian home;

And wives still pray to Juno
For boys with hearts as bold
As his who kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old.

And in the nights of winter,
When the cold north winds blow,
And the long howling of the wolves
Is heard amidst the snow;
When round the lonely cottage
Roars loud the tempest's din,
And the good logs of Algidus
Roar louder yet within;

When the oldest cask is opened,
And the largest lamp is lit;
When the chestnuts glow in the embers,
And the kid turns on the spit;
When young and old in circle
Around the firebrands close;
When the girls are weaving baskets,
And the lads are shaping bows;

When the goodman mends his armour,
And trims his helmet's plume;
When the goodwife's shuttle merrily
Goes flashing through the loom;
With weeping and with laughter
Still is the story told,
How well Horatius kept the bridge
In the brave days of old.

EPITAPH ON A JACOBITE.

LORD MACAULAY.

TO my true king I offered free from stain
Courage and faith; vain faith, and courage vain.
For him, I threw lands, honours, wealth, away,
And one dear hope, that was more prized than they.
For him I languished in a foreign clime,
Grey-haired with sorrow in my manhood's prime;
Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees;
Beheld each night my home in fevered sleep,
Each morning started from the dream to weep;
Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave
The resting-place I asked, an early grave.
Oh thou, whom chance leads to this nameless stone,
From that proud country which was once mine own,
By those white cliffs I never more must see,
By that dear language which I spake like thee,
Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

Sir Henry Taylor.

1800—1886.

HENRY TAYLOR, one of the most thoughtful poets of his time, was born at Bishop-Middleham, Co. Durham, on October 18th, 1800. His forefathers had been landed proprietors, holding in succession the estate of Swinhoe-Broomford, in the parish of Bamborough, Northumberland. But ill-fortune had led to the alienation of the estate, and his father devoted himself to farming. He was evidently a man of high culture for his position. He was the only tutor his sons had; and it is somewhat surprising to read in Sir Henry Taylor's Autobiography that, in comparison with his elder brothers, who were quick and gifted, he was very "slow and languid" in learning, and that his father's efforts in his case had but poor results compared with what it had in theirs. Something of this may have been due to the lack of a mother's care and love, for she died when Henry was but an infant, and his was especially a nature to feel keenly the lack of motherly affection and ingenious prompting. When he was about thirteen and a half years of age (in April 1814) he entered as a midshipman in the Royal Navy; but he owns that as he had been a lazy boy at home he remained a lazy boy at sea; and this may have had something to do with his being discharged in December 1814. His father married again in 1818; and, happily for

him, his stepmother was a woman who could appreciate and understand him, and to her he acknowledges the utmost indebtedness. For some time he was without employment, but now improved his time by reading and the practice of composition. A clerkship was found for him in the Audit Office in 1820, and he went out to Barbadoes. His stay there, though not a lengthened one, turned his attention to Colonial matters, and the knowledge so gained stood him in good stead afterwards.

After a period of further idleness, in which, however, vague ideas of authorship had asserted themselves, he came up to London, got an appointment in the Colonial Office, with which he remained connected to the end, began to write in the *Quarterly Review*, under J. G. Lockhart, and elsewhere. His life thenceforward was a busy and productive one. He was assiduous in the work of his office, and rose step by step to the highest permanent position. He himself humorously tells how he "coached" men of the highest distinction, when appointed Colonial Ministers, into the knowledge and traditions of the department. His works followed one another in regular succession, and these were not limited to poems, but included essays on practical life and conduct, among which "Notes from Life" and "The Statesman" probably take the first place. He was connected with all the most noted intellectual circles and influences of his day, and numbered among his friends and correspondents most of the men and women distinguished in art, science, or letters, as his correspondence, edited by Professor Dowden, will show. He married on October 17th, 1839, Alice Spring Rice, a daughter of Lord Monteagle,

and there is a little romance in connection with it, for he "won by waiting." He retired from his office at the end of 1872, and died on March 28th, 1886, in his 86th year, having for nigh twenty years been regarded as a patriarch of letters.

Sir Henry Taylor, though the bulk of his poems are in the form of dramas, was not *par excellence* a dramatic poet. He had more regard for the delicacies of character, and the *nuances* of thought in relation to them, than for incident, situation, and what would go towards effect in representation. In truth, his dramas are overweighted with thought and reflection—"too full of good things," as has been said. By far the greatest of his dramatic efforts was "Philip van Artevelde," published in 1834. The scene is laid in Flanders in the stirring fourteenth century, when the first outbreak of modern notions of liberty came into conflict with feudal inheritance. Philip's father had been a true hero, who had devoted himself to his country; and was perfidiously slain by his own countrymen. Though Philip remains for a long time apart from public affairs, he bears, like Hamlet, a conscious burden of revenge:—

> "A debt of blood
> Descended with my patrimony to me,
> Whose paying off would clear my soul's estate."

Suddenly he is called to the Captaincy of Ghent, and, resisting the extreme assumptions of the Earl of Flanders, on behalf of his fellow citizens, finally he drives the Earl out, and assumes the Regency. Hitherto his aims have been purely patriotic, now power breeds ambition, and ambition leads to complications which end in Artevelde's death, through

the perfidious dagger-thrust of Sir Fleureant. He had spared him at the prayer of Elena, whom he loved, and his passion for whom imparts a tenderer element to the play. Of "Philip van Artevelde" the author himself says, in his preface, that it is a "historical romance, cast in a dramatic and rhythmical form." And to J. G. Lockhart, in answer to a letter asking some questions, he said, "It is an attempt to represent a combination (rare, but not unnatural) of the contemplative powers of the mind with the practical, of philosophy with efficiency. . . . Philip van Artevelde had so much pity for the common people that, notwithstanding he had so highly displeased the earl, yet he was willing to throw himself upon the earl's mercy."

Just at the points where the dramatist for the stage would have engaged the spectator absolutely on the situation, Sir Henry Taylor is intent on suggesting the development of what had been latent, and already indicated as germ, in his leading personages. As a study of a group of characters, "Philip van Artevelde" stands almost alone. Indeed, Sir Henry's tendency to do full justice to all would have done something to lessen the attraction of his hero had not that hero already had very definite lines laid in by history itself. We are interested in Artevelde from the first moment to the last, but it is much the same kind of interest that we feel in Adam Bede, or Wilhelm Meister. We wish as much to see what he will become as what he will do. The pictures of his earlier life when he was content to study, and to find calm pastime in fishing, are exquisite; and the suggestion of the burden of duty left on him to avenge the cruel

murder of his father, a feeling wholly in harmony with the spirit of the time, and the sense of the weight of the burden of another duty in the protection of his sister, whence arises the promise of contending impulses, we regard as masterly. Then, when Van den Bosch comes with his offer of the captaincy of Ghent, we know that the way is prepared; he marches forward to his kingdom through many storms and battles, finally to become the victim of his success, when, as Regent of Flanders, he is lord of the power he had prayed for. The rendering is powerful, close, and true, but the pale cast of the meditative scholar's touch too often appears for pure drama. The page occasionally is oppressed with moralities, as in the speeches of Father John of Heda, Artevelde's counsellor.

"Isaac Comnenus," though earlier (1827-8), and in scheme and scope less ambitious, comes nearer to the drama of the stage. The scene is laid at Constantinople at the end of the eleventh century; and we are amazed at the author's power in restoring the spirit of the period. All lives again in his earlier scenes—the colour, the conflict, the religious and the race-enmity, and the rest—the great Emperor, and the Patriarch of the Greek Church, are clearly limned with a few forcible distinct lines; and inimitable is the cunning with which all the threads are made to converge to the crisis, when Theodora, the emperor's daughter, who was enamoured of Comnenus, finding her love unreturned, avenges herself on him in the most tragic way.

"Edwin the Fair," published in 1842, is memorable for the fine portraiture of Dunstan, Abbot of Glastonbury; and "St. Clement's Eve," the scene of which

is laid in the time of Charles VI. of France, is as remarkable for its concentration as for its careful delineations of character.

Only one of the plays—"A Sicilian Summer; or, The Virgin Widow," written between 1845 and 1849, is of the lighter or more comedy character, and in it there are more traces of conscious effort, though the two contrasted women-types—Rosalba and Fiordeliza—are exhibited with the most delicate touches. "St. Clement's Eve," his last play, was published in 1862. Sir Henry Taylor was generally too inclined to brood and meditate over his "men and women" to present them with that force of sustained and convincing reality needful for the stage. Sir F. Doyle, towards the close of his "Reminiscences" in noticing the death of his friend, Sir Henry Taylor, has these very incisive remarks: "He cared a great deal for many things, but what he did not care a great deal for he put aside as if it had no existence. He therefore allowed sundry subjects, which might have brought him, a dramatic poet, into closer and more cordial intercourse with varieties of men, to lie outside his ken, and this limited in some degree his reach of imagination, and his power of thought." He was a wonderful restorer of historic episodes; a romancer born out of due time, seeking to accommodate himself to a form hardly in keeping with his spirit and temper. Many bright droplets of lyrical verse are scattered through the plays, full of light and natural *naïveté* and brightness. The same has to be said of the short poems printed at the end of the plays. There is a series on places in Italy, which have a beauty and character of their own.

ALEX. H. JAPP.

PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE.

1834.

SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

PART THE FIRST.

Act III.

Scene I.—*Night. A Wood near Bruges.*

The Lord of Occo *and* Followers.

Occo.

No more than half a league to Bruges? then halt,
And let the men-at-arms be drawn together
Where the ground's open. Berckel, ride thou on
And hail the warders on the walls; make known
That for the love which we have shown the Earl
We're driven forth of Ghent, and humbly crave
His hospitality.

[*To* Van Aeswyn, *who enters.*

Van Aeswyn! What?
Where is the litter?

Van Aeswyn. Dropped some mile behind
To rest the bearers.

Occo. Lazy, loitering rogues!
What of the Lady?

Van Aeswyn. Still much moved.

Occo. Go back;
Keep thou beside her, lest she should prevail
To make the varlets speak. Let none approach
After we pass the gates but men of mine,
Nor ever let the litter be unclosed.
Now, if we're all in order, march we on.

SCENE II.—*A Banqueting Hall in the Stadt House at Bruges. Tables are spread, and the* EARL OF FLANDERS, *the* HASE OF FLANDERS, *with several* Lords, Knights, *and* followers *of the* Earl, *are entertained by the* MAYOR *of Bruges and the* Aldermen.

Earl. Sir Mayor, we thank you; 'tis a royal feast.
Mayor. My gracious Lord, the supper is but poor;
Very exceeding poor the supper is;
And yet the most we can; your humble hosts,
Being but meagre citizens God wot,
Can but purvey your Highness what they have,
A very sorry supper.
Alderman. True indeed.
Yet if your Highness please to cast it up,
A hundred florins—
Mayor. Hold thy peace, Van Holst;
The minstrels twang their cat-gut.
Earl (*aside to the* Hase). In good time;
If aught could make me cast my supper up
'Twere to taste further of their courtesies.
Soho, Sir Minstrel! what hast got to sing?
Van Holst.
That hast been cared for, please your Highness; yes,
We knew your Highness had a skilful ear,
And 'twas not every poesy would please.
This is a ditty craftily conceited,
Trump'd up as 'twere extempore for the nonce!
He was no tavern cantabank that made it,
But a Squire Minstrel of your Highness's court.
So—sing, Sir Minstrel—there you have it—ah!
Fal-lal—the very thing—the tune's "Green Sleeves.

The Minstrel *Sings.*

The little bird sat on the greenwood tree,
And the sun was as bright as bright could be;
The leaf was broad, the shade was deep,
The Lion of Flanders lay fast asleep.

The little bird sang, "Sir Lion, arise,
For I hear with my ears and see with my eyes,
And I know what I know, and I tell thee this,
That the men of Ghent have done something amiss."

From his lair the Lion of Flanders rose,
And he shook his mane and toss'd up his nose;
"Ere a leaf be fallen or summer be spent,"
Quoth he, "if God spare me, I'll go to Ghent.

"For a little bird sang and I dream'd beside
That the people of Ghent were puff'd up with pride;
And I had been far over hill and dale
And was fast asleep, and they trod on my tail."

Ere a leaf was fallen the Lion he went
And growl'd a growl at the gates of Ghent:
But they bended low when they saw him awake,
And said that they trod on his tail by mistake.

The little bird sat on the bush so bare,
And the leaf fell brown on the Lion's lair;
The little bird pick'd a berry so red
And dropp'd it down on the Lion's head.

"Sir Lion, awake, and put out your claws,
And lift your chin from your tawny paws;
My ears are smaller than yours, but more
I hear than you, and worse than before."

The Lion stirr'd and awoke with a snort,
And swelled with rage till his breath came short
"Ere the brown leaf meet with the flake of snow
On the roundabout stair, to Ghent I'll go.

"For a little bird sang, and I dream'd as well,
That the people of Ghent were as false as Hell;
Coming by stealth when nought I fear'd,
They trod on my corns and pull'd my beard."

Ere a snow-flake fell the Lion he went
And roar'd a roar at the gates of Ghent;
The gates they shook though they were fast barr'd,
And the warders heard it at Oudenarde.

At the first roar ten thousand men
Fell sick to death—he roar'd again,
And the blood of twenty thousand flow'd
On the bridge of Roone, as broad as the road.

Woe worth thee, Ghent! if, having heard
The first and second, thou bidest the third!
Flat stones and awry, grass, potsherd and shard,
Thy place shall be like an old churchyard.

Earl. A singular good song and daintily accompanied with the music. Give him three florins and a denier for the lad withal.

Van Holst. Your Highness is too bountiful. He made it not himself. 'Twas your Highness's Serjeant-Minstrel that made it. The making and mending of it together was seven days and nights, bating twelve hours for sleeping, and four hours for eating, and five minutes for saying his prayers. Drinking never stopped him, for still the more he drank the more he made of it. And he ranted and sang, an' it like your Highness, that it would have pleased you to

hear him; for being that the song was made in honour of your Highness, he said he could sing it a thousand times over and think better of it every time.

Earl. It is good poesy—marry and good prophecy too. Hark you, Master Mayor; I have somewhat repented me that I was wrought upon by those old Knights of Ghent to proffer terms of such easy acquittance.

Mayor. When your Highness is graciously pleased to give away your advantages, it is not for such as I to say you do wrong; but every man in Bruges that is well affected to your Highness said that three hundred heads was too little.

Earl. By my faith they said true; and Gilbert Matthew told me no less; but I was persuaded by the old Knights; I was too easy with them. Where is Gilbert Matthew?

Gilbert. Here, my Lord.

Earl.

Come hither, Gilbert. I have bethought me, Gilbert,
I almost sinn'd against true chivalry
To let yon rabble off.

Gilbert. Your Highness says it.

Earl. Thou'dst tell me 'twas not by thy counsels.

Gilbert. Sir,

As many heads of each insurgent craft
Would not have been denied. A hundred nail'd
Like weasels to the gates of each wall'd town
Thorough the States of Flanders—that had been
A warning wholesome and significant
To the good towns.

Earl. A salutary sign.

I would the bargain were to make again.
Why so now! who comes here? Sir Walter? Yes

Enter SIR WALTER D'ARLON.

D'Arlon, I never see thee but with joy.
What new adventure hast thou been upon?
We miss thee oft at Court, but thy return
Is ever with new honours at thy heels.
What captives follow thee to Bruges to-night?
Or hast thou turn'd base metal into gold
And bring'st their ransoms?—either way is well.

D'Arlon. My Lord, I come alone.

Earl. Why, welcome still!

D'Arlon.

Yet there is something following at my heels
Which hardly shall your Highness in like sort
Make welcome here.

Earl. Why, say'st thou? what is that?

D'Arlon. Ill rumours, my good Lord.

Earl. Ill rumours? how?

D'Arlon. The rebels are alive again and fresh.
The messengers of peace lie stabb'd to death
Upon the steps i' the market-place.

Earl. Not so!
It cannot be;—D'Arlon, it must be false.

D'Arlon. I fear, my Lord, it will not so be found.

Earl.

Nay, nay,—so stripp'd of everything—so bare
As we had made them—scarce a leader left,
And those that were, so wild and scant of skill!

D'Arlon. That were an ugly breach if not repair'd.
They've made young Artevelde their chief.

Earl. God help them!
A man that as much knowledge has of war
As I of brewing mead! God help their souls!
A bookish nursling of the monks—a meacock!

D'Arlon. My Lord, I'm fearful you mistake the man.

If my accounts be true, the life he's led
Served rather in its transit to eclipse
Than to show forth his nature; and, that pass'd,
You'll now behold him as he truly is,
One of a cold and of a constant mind,
Not quicken'd into ardent action soon,
Nor prompt for petty enterprise, yet bold,
Fierce when need is, and capable.

Earl. Thou sayst?
And hath he slain the Knights!

D'Arlon. With his own hand.

Earl. I tell thee it is false; it cannot be.
Thou, Gilbert Matthew, what think'st thou?

Gilbert. My Lord,
It may be there's some skirmishing at Ghent,
Which rumour, floating like a mist before,
Augments to this.

Earl. Thou deem'st there's nought to fear?

Gilbert. I deem of Ghent as of a winter fly
That in a gleam of sunshine creeping forth
Kicks with stiff legs a feeble stroke or two
And falls upon its back.

Earl. Then all is well.
Gilbert, thy wisdom never was at fault.
A comfortable councillor art thou.
Sirrah, what news? [*To an* Attendant *who enters.*

Attendant. The Lord of Occo, Sir,
Came with his men-at-arms before the walls,
And being that he was driven forth of Ghent,
The warders have admitted him, and here
He waits your pleasure.

Earl. Bid him in at once.
He comes like confirmation. Oh Ghent! Ghent!
Oh ye ungracious people!

Enter the LORD OF OCCO.

Speak, Sir Guy;
Out with the worst, for I have guessed it all.
Fame was here first as breathless as you are.

Occo. 'Tis the worst fortune e'er befell me yet
To be the bearer of this heavy news.
Our friends are slain, the White-Hoods hold the town,
And he, the homicide whose bloody hand
Despatch'd the peaceful Knights, is Lord of all.

Earl. Oh that unhappy people! hear me, God!
Hear me, ye Host of Heaven and all good men!
If e'er I lift the wine-cup to my lips,
If ever other than a soldier's bed
Contain me, or if any pleasant sport
Inveigle off my heart while that town stands,
May I be driven from my royalties
To dwell with beasts like him that sinn'd of old!
Rise, Sirs; no more of feasting here. Sir Guy,
Such entertainment as such times afford
We'll give you. Bid my chamberlain see to it.
Adieu, Sirs; when the walls of Ghent lie flat
Our revel we resume.

D'Arlon. Leave *me*, my Lord,
The entertainment of your friends from Ghent;
My house will hold them. (*Aside.*) Grant me this, my Lord;
They need a supervisor.

Earl. Good;—Sir Guy,
Sir Walter D'Arlon is your host at Bruges.
At noon to-morrow come to Council, Sirs,
You that are of it. Minstrel, stand aside—
What! are you blind? Goodnight, goodnight, adieu.

SCENE III.—*A Chamber in the* LORD OF ARLON'S *House.* ADRIANA VAN MERESTYN *and three* Attendants *in the* LORD OF OCCO'S *livery.*

Adriana. Whither have you brought me, Sirs?
What house is this?
Nay, must I ask for ever? Wilt not speak?
Nor thou, nor thou? If ye are bid be dumb,
But say ye are so, and I'll ask no more.
First Attendant. Madam, we are.
Adriana. Who bid you?—not a word?
If you're afraid to tell me, make a sign.
Was it the Lord of Occo? 'Twas not he?
Then whosoe'er enjoin'd it, send him here.
Entreat him were it but for courtesy
To come to me. He that hath tied your tongues
May loose them or be free to use his own.
I pray thee send him; thou art not so rude,
To guess thee by thy mien, as this so slight,
So slender service to deny me—no—
Or else thou wear'st a mask.

[*The first* Attendant *goes out. She turns aside from the others.*

Befriend me now,
Heart, head, and tongue, if life is left them still.
Oh for some potion that for one hour's space
Should make me twice myself!

Enter VAN AESWYN.

Aeswyn (*to the* Attendants). Depart the chamber.

[*Exeunt* Attendants.

Adriana. Master Van Aeswyn!
Aeswyn. Madam!

Adriana. It is thou
That thus abusest me!
Aeswyn. I, Madam! No;
I have done nothing; if a wrong there be,
It lies with others; I have but obey'd
Whom I am bound to serve.
Adriana. Alas! thy guilt
Is but more abject, being ministrant
Unto another's, and thyself no less
Accountable to Heaven. His lust and greed
Whom thou abettest thou dost make thine own
And nothing gett'st but wages of thy work
To pay thy sin. What! is't not shame on shame?
Thou puttest thine immortal soul to sale
For profit of another, thy reward
Being the sorry guerdon of a Squire
With blot and stain of such addition vile
Of countenance and favour, bred of guilt,
As he that uses thee may please to show thee.
Oh soil of bad men's service! Thou to stamp
A gentle name with stigma of such deeds!
Oh curse of bad men's hire!
Aeswyn. Nay, Madam, nay,
'Tis not for countenance, still less for hire:
But I have taken service with this Lord,
And by the law of arms——
Adriana. What law is that?
'Tis not the law of God, nor yet above it.
Aeswyn.
An honest Squire is bound by plighted faith
And by the law of arms, to execute
His Lord's behests.
Adriana. Though they be base and foul
And cowardly and craven? Law of arms!

Grant 'twere that law supernal it is not,
Yet dost thou break it, for all wrongs to women
Stand in its code denounced.

Aeswyn. By all that's just
The deed misliked me from the first; three times
I pray'd his Lordship to bethink himself
What quittance he should hazard and what blame
In wronging of so rich and good a lady;
But still he said the Earl should bring him through
Let come what might; insisting that by law
You were in wardship, and his Grace might grant
Your hand to whom was fittest.

Adriana. Oh blind craft
And ignorance of covetous knaves! They err.
Me shall no earthly Prince nor Potentate
Toss like a morsel of his broken meat
To any supplicant. Be they advised
I am in wardship to the King of Kings;
God and my heart alone dispose of me.

Aeswyn. Madam, I would it were so.

Adriana. Say besides
The Earl should cast the mantle of his power
Over thy master, what shall cover thee,
That canst not borrow greatness for the cloak
Of evil deeds, from naked, manifest shame?
Lo, here I stand in jeopardy and fear,
Weak, trembling, sick at heart, and wearied so
With perturbation and with pain so rack'd
That I have lost my patience and for hours
Have pray'd for God's deliverance through death;
Yet rather would I, yea, far rather, live
A dateless life of anguish such as this,
Rather live out my reason thus and twist
For restless years upon a bed-rid couch

With the sole sense of dotage and distress,
Than change with thee and take upon my soul
Thy forfeiture and lodge within my breast
That worm of memory which to-day shall breed,
And which upon thy death-bed shall not die,
But being of the soul shall be immortal.
Go—God forgive thee! for not mine the heart
That would invoke a curse.
Aeswyn. Lady, I swear
I bore a part not willingly in this;
And could I without ruin of my fortunes
Do aught that should redeem it——
Adriana. For thy fortunes,
Trust them to me.

Enter one of the Attendants.

Attendant. My Lord is at the gate
And asks for you. [*Exit.*
Adriana. I say, trust them to me.
Do to thyself the justice to renounce
This false Knight's service, and to me one act
Of loyalty: seek out with instant haste
The Lord of Arlon; tell him I am here
In tribulation and beseech his aid,
And bid him by the love he bears his lady
To grant it me with speed. Wilt thou do this?
Aeswyn. Madam, I will.
Adriana. Go now then to thy Lord
Lest he suspect thy tarriance. I within
Will wait the issue. Make all speed thou canst.

ACT IV.

SCENE III.—*Before the Stadt-House, as in the last Scene of the Second Act.—The* people *assemble.* FRANS ACKERMAN *and* PETER VAN NUITRE *in front.*

Ackerman. 'Tis certain something has befallen him.

Van Nuitre.

But where? He might be found, if so it were.

Ackerman.

Hast sought him at Jozyne's estaminet?

Van Nuitre.

There and at every lodgment in the town.
Old mother Van den Bosch will take her oath
He went forth early to Van Artevelde's.

Ackerman.

Sure nothing can have happen'd to him there.

Van Nuitre.

That's what I doubt. The best will sometimes trip.
They were not in such unison of mind
As we could wish.

Ackerman. I cannot think it—No—
But this day's business shall no farther fare
Until the truth appear. Soft! now he comes.

ARTEVELDE *enters. There is dead silence. He walks slowly up the steps of the platform.*

Artevelde. Are we all here?

One from the Crowd. What's left of us is here,
Our bones.

Artevelde. We're wasted in the flesh, 'tis true;
But we have spirits left. We all are here.

Ackerman.

I will say nay to that. Where's Van den Bosch?

Artevelde.

Silence, Frans Ackerman! we want not him.

Ackerman. Then I demand if he be dead or living?
Artevelde. He lives.
Ackerman. Where is he, then?
Artevelde. Where all shall be
Who seek, by mutiny against their Chief,
To do unlawful deeds. What ask ye more?
He is arrested and confined.
Ackerman. What cause
For this proceeding hath that brave man given?
Artevelde.
If, as his friend, thou ask wherein he err'd,
I'll tell it to this people and to thee,—
Not, mark you me, as rendering account,
For that were needless,—but of free good-will.
Sirs, Van den Bosch insisted, in despite
Of all dissuasion, all authority,
The messenger from Bruges should be waylaid
And put to death—yea, nothing less would serve,—
That so the tidings which I'm here to tell
Might never reach your ears. To place restraint
Upon this obstinate humour and give scope
To your deliberations, for a while
He is in duress. Are ye well content?
Many voices.
Content, content! The tidings, what are they?
Artevelde.
Frans Ackerman, thou hear'st what cause constrain'd
Me, much reluctant, thus to use thy friend.
Art thou content?
Ackerman. I am.
Artevelde. So far is well;
And we set forth unanimous, to end
I trust no otherwise. Fair Sirs of Ghent!
Van Aeswyn, the Ambassador from Bruges,

Comes with credentials from the Earl, to show
What mind he bears toward you. Bitterer words
Did never Christian man to Christians send.
But we are fallen, my friends, and vain it were
For us to quarrel with the proud man's scorn.
Then to the matter take ye heed alone
And trouble not your hearts for aught beside.
He will admit you to no terms but these,—
That every man and woman born in Ghent
Shall meet him on the road, halfway to Bruges,
Bare-footed and bare-headed, in their shirts,
With halters on their necks, and there kneel down
And put their lives and chattels at his feet.
This if ye do not now, he's sworn an oath
That he will never hearken to you more,
But famine shall consume you utterly,
And in your desolate town he'll light a flame
That shall not be extinguish'd. Speak your minds.
Will ye accept the proffer'd terms or no ?

Burghers.

Give us your counsel. Tell us what is best.

Artevelde.

What can I say ? Ye know that as ye are
Ye cannot live. Death opens every door
And sits in every chamber by himself.
If what might feed a sparrow should suffice
For soldiers' meals, ye have not wherewithal
To linger out three days. For corn, there's none;
A mouse imprison'd in your granaries
Were starved to death. And what then should I say ?
Why truly this : that whatsoe'er men's plight,
There is a better choosing and a worse,
If their discretion be not overthrown
By force of their calamities. Three things

Ye have to choose of. Ye may take his terms
And go with halters round your necks to Loo.
Ye will be then his servants and his wealth,
The labourers of his vineyard ; and I deem,
Although a haughty Lord he be and cruel,
That he will have the sense to spare his own
When vengeance hath been fed. I say I deem
That when the blood of those that led you on
And of their foremost followers hath flow'd,
He will be satiate and stay his hand.
If this to try be your deliberate choice,
I will not say that ye be ill-advised.
How are ye minded ? Let your Deacons speak.

[*The people speak in consultation with each other and with the* Deacons.

Deacon of the Mariners.

We of the mariners deem that this were best.

Deacon of the Cordwainers.

There's nothing better can be done.

Deacon of the Fullers. Agreed.
Our craft was never forward in the war.

Deacon of the Weavers.

But, Master Philip, said you not three ways
There were to choose of ? Tell us what remains.

Artevelde.

Ye may have patience and expect the close.
If nothing else seem fit, betake yourselves
Unto your churches ; at the altar's foot
Kneel down and pray and make a Christian end,
And God will then have mercy on your souls.
This is the second way.

Deacon of the Weavers. And what the third ?

Artevelde.

If there be found amongst you men whose blood

Runs not so chilly yet as thus to die,
Then there's this third way open—but not else:—
That they whose plight is best and hearts are stout
Be muster'd suddenly, equipp'd and arm'd;
That with our little left of food and wine
The sumpter beasts be laden for their use;
That then they follow me: to-morrow's eve
Should find us knocking at the gates of Bruges,
And then we'd strike a stroke for life or death.
This is the third and sole remaining course.
Choose of the three.

Many voices. Choose for us, Master Philip:
You are more wise than we.

Artevelde. If by my choice
Ye will abide, a soldier's death for me.

Many voices.
To Bruges! to Bruges! a venture forth to Bruges!

Artevelde.
Why yet, then, in our embers there is life.
Let whosoe'er would follow me, repair
To the West Port. From them that come I'll choose
Five thousand, if so many there should be,
And when night falls, we'll sally from the gates.

Many citizens again.
For Bruges! for Bruges! 'tis gallantly resolved.

Artevelde.
Then fare ye well, ye citizens of Ghent!
This is the last time ye will see me here
Unless God prosper me past human hope.
I thank you for the dutiful demeanour
Which never—never—verily no, not once,
Have I found wanting, though severely tried
When discipline might seem without reward.
Fortune has not been kind to me, good friends;

But let not that deprive me of your loves,
Or of your good report. Be this the word:
"His rule was brief, calamitous—but just."
No glory which a prosperous fortune gilds,
If shorn of this addition, could suffice
To lift my heart so high as it is now.
This is that joy in which my soul is strong,
That there is not a man amongst you all
Who can reproach me that I used my power
To do him an injustice. If there be,
It is not to my knowledge; yet I pray
That he will now forgive me, taking note
That I had not to deal with easy times.

First citizen.

Oh, Master Philip, there is none—not one.

Second citizen.

Most justly and most wisely you have ruled.

Artevelde.

I thank you, Sirs; farewell to you once more;
Once more, farewell. If I return to Ghent
A glory and dominion will be yours
Such as no city since the olden time
Hath been so bold to conquer or to claim.
If I return no more, God's will be done!
To Him and to His providence I leave you.

[*He descends. The people come round him, seizing his hands and crying confusedly,* "God bless you, Master Philip! God be with you!"

Nay, press not on me, friends; I see ye weep,
Which ye did never for your past mishaps.
But ye shall be disburthen'd of your griefs
The rather than dishearten'd by these tears,
Or else should I reprove them—so—farewell!

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The field of Merle, in the environs of Bruges.* ARTEVELDE, VAN DEN BOSCH, VAN RYK, VAN MUCK, *and others.*

Artevelde. Not a step farther; give the word to halt,
And bring the waggons up; we can't be better.
God grant that they come hither in their haste!
Here is the fighting-ground, and there the slough
In which they needs must perish should they yield.
We can't be better.

Van den Bosch. Let it then be here.
I've probed the slough.

Artevelde. That I did too; 'tis deep.

Van den Bosch. He is a taller man than you or I
That finds the bottom with his head above.

Artevelde. It is an hour to sunset.

Van Ryk. Nay, 'tis more.

Artevelde. A little more, Van Ryk. I would to God
The sun might not go down upon us here
Without a battle fought!

Van den Bosch. If so it should
We pass a perilous night.

Artevelde. A nipping night,
And wake a wasted few the morrow morn.

Van Muck. We have a supper left.

Artevelde. My Lady's page
If he got ne'er a better should be wroth
And burn in effigy my Lady's steward.
For us and for one supper 'twill suffice;
But he's a skilful man at splitting hairs
That can make two on't.

Van Ryk. Ay, or leave behind
A breakfast in his dish.
Artevelde. We break our fast
Elsewhere to-morrow. I pray God the Saint
Whose feast they celebrate to-night at Bruges
May steep them well in wine. If Ukenheim
Get undiscover'd in, we shall not miss
To profit by his skill.
Van den Bosch. We'll hope the best;
But if there be a knave in power unhang'd,
And in his head a grain of sense undrown'd,
He'll be their caution not to——
Artevelde. Van den Bosch,
Talk we of battle and survey the field,
For I *will* fight. Let stakes be driven in
Amongst the rushes at the nether end
Of this morass. Van Ryk, look thou to that.
And thou, Van Muck, unload the victual here;
Then tilt the waggons up behind the stakes
And pierce them for cross-bows. A horse for me,
That I may know the ground. And now, friends all,
Let's to our charges. Ere the red sun sink
Beyond yon city, Ghent is lost or saved!

SCENE II.—*An open tent erected for public entertainment in the Market-place of Bruges.—Boisterous songs and other sounds of riot and jollity are heard on all sides. Within the tent a miscellaneous company are drinking, and amongst them is* UKENHEIM *in the dress of a Mariner of Bruges.*

Ukenheim. I pray you pledge me in this, to our better acquaintance.

Lunyz. At your service, Sir. What say'st thou, Jan Trickle? Is not this the right way? Is not this the narrow road? Knew'st thou ever a Saint's day

more seemly celebrated? Dost see what a devotior there is to it?

Trickle. I see very many righteous gentlemen very drunk. But my wife says, were they at church it should be more seemly.

Kroolkhuys. Bah! didst ever know a man's wife that liked him to be drinking without her to help?

Gulpus. Mine is a rare helpmate. . . .

Lunyz (*looking out into the Market-place*). Here is a minstrel twiddles with the strings of his cithern. Now we shall hear a song.

THE FOLLOWING SONG IS SUNG TO A VULGAR TUNE.

Who mounts the merry-go-round with me,
Who mounts the merry-go-round?
Tis I, I, I,—and who be ye
That would mount the merry-go-round?

A blacksmith I,—spearheads as good
As e'er from Bordeaux came
I've made, and would in Ghentsmen's blood
Be bold to dip the same.

Who mounts the merry-go-round with me,
Who mounts the merry-go-round?
'Tis I, I, I,—and who may'st be
That would mount the merry-go-round?

A cutler I,—as true a blade
As ever Ebro steel'd
Is this I've made, nor will't be stayed
By any Ghentsman's shield.

Who mounts the merry-go-round with me,
Who mounts the merry-go-round?

'Tis I, I, I,—and now let us see
Who mounts the merry-go-round ?

A barber I,—and well appear'd
My handicraft, for when
A Ghentsman's beard I shortly shear'd
It never grew again.

Who mounts the merry-go-round with me,
Who mounts the merry-go-round ?
'Tis I, I, I,—and a priest was he
That would mount the merry-go-round.

A Ghentsman of his wounds lay sick,
And shall I be saved ? he cried ;
I gave him a kick, bade him ask Old Nick
And he should be satisfied.

Kroolkhuys. I' faith he sings like a nightingale. No more thank you,—I cannot—cannot . . . well, if I must . . . (*drinks*). 'Tis a charming lullaby, and the sentiment very tender and soothing. Let us all do as we would be done by, God bless us!

[*Falls asleep.*

[*Suddenly is heard from the Market-place a loud cry of* "To arms! To arms!"

Ukenheim (*starting up and drawing his sword*). To arms? What! the men of Ghent come to us? What! the scarecrows from Ghent! To arms! to arms! Out and down with them! To arms! to arms!

Krooikhuys (*waking*). Why how is this? the men of Ghent! What ho! give me my coat of proof!

Ukenheim. Let cowards stay behind. To arms! to arms!

[*They rush out confusedly.*

SCENE III.—*The Palace.*

The LORD OF OCCO *and* GILBERT MATTHEW.

Gilbert. His Highness will be here anon. Sir Guy,
Freely accept the combat for the morrow.
Count on my speed. There's not a man in Bruges
Who has outlived the day I wish'd him dead.
The threads of many destinies I hold
Unknown to them they bind for life or death
And I am punctual as the planet stars.
A winter's night, as long as nights are now,
Is worth an age.

Occo. One doubt detains me still.
The Earl, if ever it were known, would——

Gilbert. Hark!
'Tis over, that. He loves him now no more.
For every philtre that can make men love
I know the secret of an antidote.
I've warn'd him of those private ties in Ghent.
Enough. I've dosed him.

Occo. Well, it shall be done.

Gilbert. I will provide the hands.

Occo. You shall not need.
I have already sent for two tried men,—
Italians; they are practised hands and fit.

Gilbert. I have you then; 'tis Erclo and Romero.

Occo. The same.

Enter the EARL.

Earl. What shouting's this I hear abroad?

Occo. The revellers, my good Lord; they pitch the bar,
And shoot with cross-bows for a prize. My Lord,
At noon to-morrow, if his heart but hold,
I'll meet Sir Walter D'Arlon.

Gilbert. In good truth

But are these shouts of revel? Hark, again!
They cry "To arms!"
Earl. By Heaven! I think 'tis that!
And hear ye not the bells? They're ringing backwards.
Occo. 'Tis an alarm.

Enter the LORD OF ARLON, SIR ROBERT MARESCHAULT, *and others.*

Earl. Well, D'Arlon, what is this?
D'Arlon.
The men of Ghent, my Lord, the men of Ghent.
Earl. What, here?
D'Arlon. Two miles aloof they make a stand.
Earl. What, are they mad?
D'Arlon. I think not mad, my Lord,
But desperate.
Earl. My friends, 'tis all as one.
Now shall this war be gloriously closed,
And famine, that was tedious, be o'erta'en.
Bring out my banner, summon all to arms,
Then forth and fight them.
Gilbert. Please you, Sir, to say
How many they may number.
Sir Robert. At a guess,
About five thousand.
Gilbert. May they move or stand?
Sir Robert.
Since they were first descried they have not stirr'd.
Earl.
Forth with my banner; out with horse and foot.
Sir Knights, we muster in the Market-place.
Bring me my armour, ho!
Gilbert. My Lord, one word,
Ere yet the Knights depart. These men are few,
But they are desperate; famine-bitten are they,
But alway are the leanest wolves most brave

To break the fold. Sir, let us not be rash;
Our men-at-arms are somewhat flush'd with drink
And may be ill to guide. Sir, think upon it.
Fight them to-morrow. Let them sleep to-night
In winter's lap, beneath the ragged tent
Of a December's sky. When morning breaks
You'll see them lying upon yon hill-side
As dead and sapless as the last month's leaves.
Give them this night.

The Hase of Flanders.

They'll think we stay through fear.

Gilbert.

Think they their will; whate'er they think of that
They shall unthink to-morrow.

Earl. By my faith,
I know not, Gilbert, but thou mayst be right.
The winter's night is sure to thin their ranks
Of fighting men; and if they're scantly stored
With victual, which is probable to think,
They shall endure it worse.

Enter the Mayor *in haste.*

Mayor. My Lord, my Lord,
The crafts fly forth by thousands from the gates
Unorder'd and unled.

Earl. Who kept the gates?
How came they open? Walter, haste thee, haste!
And bring the madmen back. [*Exit* D'Arlon.
How came they so?

Mayor. A simple mariner avouch'd, my Lord,
That he had heard your Highness's own mouth
Give out the order.

Earl. Hang the slave! 'twas false.

Mayor. So thought the warders; nor had they complied
But that the people, being much inflamed,
Menaced their lives.

Enter a SQUIRE.

Squire. Sir Walter, Sir, sends word
The town is almost emptied. He entreats
Your Highness will not look to bring them back,
Which is past hope, but sound at once to arms
And send them leaders.

Earl. Gilbert, we must forth.

Gilbert. Ay, go we forth, and fear not for the end.
Fifty to five, we surely must do well,
Though peradventure for the sparing lives
We might have done more wisely.

Earl. Sirs, be sudden;
And when you're mounted in the Market-place,
I'll give you there your charges. Sound to horse.

SCENE VIII.—*A Street in Bruges.—It is Night. The* EARL OF FLANDERS *and* SIR ROBERT MARESCHAULT *enter, preceded by* Attendants *bearing torches.*

Earl. What succours we can find I'll lead myself.
Was ever such disaster! Madmen first,
And cowards after!

Enter a Soldier *in haste.*

Soldier. Fly, my Lord! fly, fly!
The gates are lost; they're now within the walls.

Earl. Why say they are, and must I therefore fly?
Make for the Market-place; we'll rally there
Whoever will be rallied.—Pass we on—
Lights to the Market-place.

Enter another Soldier.

Soldier. Is't you, my Lord?
Oh! not that way! the men of Ghent are there.
Fly, fly, my Lord!

Earl. The men of Ghent are where?

Soldier. I' the Market-place, my Lord.
Earl. Already there!
Sir Robert. Put out your lights.
Earl. Ay, truly, now all's lost.
Put out your lights, good fellows all, and fly.
Save me ye cannot, and ye may yourselves.
[*The lights are extinguished.*
Which way to turn I know not.
Sir Robert. Down the street
I see the flash of cressets that come hither;
Hence, in God's name! Here, varlet, doff thy cloak,
And give it to my Lord.
Earl. Throw mine away,
Or it might else betray thy life; get hence;
But if thou fallest in the enemy's hands,
Have a good tongue; say not thou saw'st me here.
Adieu, Sir Robert; each the other hazards
By holding thus together.
Sir Robert. Sir, Farewell. [*Exit.*

SCENE IX.—*The Market-place of* Bruges.—*In front,* ARTEVELDE *with* CLARA *and* D'ARLON. *Next,* UKENHEIM, FRANS ACKERMAN, VAN NUITRE, *and other* Leaders. *Behind them are crowds of armed* Followers *and* Attendants *bearing torches.*

Artevelde.
War hath dealt hardly with the noble D'Arlon;
Him gold not ransoms, and to stricter bonds
A captive Knight was never yet consign'd.
[*Turning to his* Followers.
Van Muck returns not. Who amongst you all
Hath eye of lynx and leveret's foot to speed
Through all the town with inquisition sure
And leave no corner of a house unsearch'd?
Where is Van Ryk?

Ukenheim. He left us at the gates.

Artevelde. True, true, upon a mission sent by me.
He will be here anon. Then Ukenheim,
Go thou, with such assistance as thou wilt,
Upon the quest, through every lane and street.
Take him, if possibly ye can, alive.
Evil and folly hath he wrought against us,
But never treason; he had wrong'd us less
But for the renegades that gave him counsel.
Bring forth the Lord of Occo.

[Occo *is brought forward bound.*

So, my Lord!

Enter VAN MUCK *and his party.*

Another?

Van Muck. Gilbert Matthew, Sir, we bring.

Artevelde. And not the Earl?

Van Muck. No; he, they say, escaped,
And took the road to Lisle. He lay some space
Hid in a hovel till the search went by,
And then he slunk away.

Artevelde. Long must thou wait,
Earl, ere thou see thy heritage again!
Bring Gilbert Matthew forth.

[*He is brought in bound.*

So, Gilbert Matthew!

Gilbert. Young upstart, what wouldst thou with Gilbert Matthew?

Artevelde.
Be patient, Sir; you'll know it. Where art thou,
Frans Ackerman? Despatch ere break of day
A hundred waggons on the road to Ghent
Laden with corn and wine. That done, send forth
To Damme and Sluys and empty out their stores
For a fresh convoy. Have me men prepared

To ride to Ypres, Courtray, Cassel, Bergues,
To Poperinguen and to Roussaelere,
And bid the Mayor and Burghers of each town
Send me its keys. Well met, bold Van den Bosch!

Enter VAN DEN BOSCH, *with* Followers.

Well met at Bruges, my brethren in arms!
As ye were brave, so be ye temperate now.
Let not the small-crafts suffer. Spare their blood,
For they but follow'd in the train of power
And many wished us in their hearts no ill.
To all shall plunder plentifully flow
Out of the coffers of the rich; but him
That spills a foreigner's or craftsman's blood
I mulct of all his share, and, this night past,
The price (not willingly so long postponed,
But needfully for this tumultuous night)
Of all blood-guiltiness is paid in blood.
Take heed of what I say; ye ought to know
For good or ill my promises are kept.
The debt of vengeance justly due to Ghent
Ye shall behold acquitted where ye stand.

[*Turning to* OCCO *and* GILBERT MATTHEW.

Look, Van den Bosch, upon your former friends,
And say what they deserve.

Van den Bosch. In this world death,
And after that let Satan tend his own.
I should commend their bodies to the rack
But that I'm loth so long to keep their souls
Out of hell-fire.

Occo. Thy heart was ever hard;
But, Artevelde, *thou* wilt not stain thy hands
By killing in cold blood two helpless men!
If thou'rt a soldier, do not such a deed.
Soldiers by soldiers in the field are slain,
Not murder'd in the market-place.

Artevelde. Agreed;
And if the name of soldier can be claim'd
By both or one of you, ye shall not die.
Bring forth the Friar. [*A* Friar *is brought forward.*
Save you, holy Sir!
Say in the face of these two that stand here
That which thou said'st to me.
Friar. Sir, it was this:
Here in the hospital expired but now
Of many wounds a Florentine, by name
Romero, who, repentant ere his death,
Confessed an impious contract, for a bribe
From Gilbert Matthew and Sir Guy of Occo,
To kill the Lord of Arlon, for some spite
That each had to him.
Occo. Miscreant, he lied!
Whoe'er procured him, it was never I.
Master Van Artevelde, and you, my Lord,
Believe not I would sin in such a sort.
Have mercy on a miserable man! [*Falls on his knees.*
Oh God! there's some mistake, or else he lied.
Gilbert. How say'st thou that he lied? Sirs, it is true
I with this craven beggarly companion—
Of whose accompliceship to do the deed
And not the deed itself I speak with shame—
I with this caitiff truly did conspire
For good and ample reasons to remove
Sir Walter D'Arlon from this troublesome world.
Such chances as no prudence could forefend
Have baulk'd my purpose and I go myself.
Wherefore, Sirs, God be with you! To the block!
What are ye dreaming of, ye sluggish hinds?
Artevelde (*signing to the* men-at-arms, *who lead out* Gilbert Matthew).
Ay, Gilbert, God forgive thee for thy sins!

Thou steppest statelily the only walk
Thou hast to take on earth. Full many a man
That lives a godlier life less bravely dies.
Take forth Sir Guy of Occo.

Occo. Hear me yet.
If through pretext of justice I am doomed
What justice is it that believes not me
And yet believes such villains as Romero
And Gilbert Matthew? Find a credible tongue
To testify against me ere you strike.

Enter VAN RYK, *conducting* ADRIANA.

Artevelde.
Behold the witness! Look upon this face
And bid death welcome. Lead him to the block.

Adriana.
Oh, spare him; speak not now of shedding blood,
Now, in the hour that Heaven has rescued us;
Vengeance is God's, whose function take not thou;
Spare him, Van Artevelde, oh! spare his life!

Artevelde.
Not though an Angel plead. Vengeance is God's;
But God doth oftentimes dispense it here
By human ministration. To my hands
He render'd victory this eventful day
For uses of His own, and this is one.
Let Flanders judge me from my deeds to-night,
That I from this time forth will do His will;
Justice with mercy tempering where I may,
But executing always. Take him hence.

[Occo *is led out.*

Now, Adriana, I am wholly thine.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART THE SECOND.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—VAN ARTEVELDE'S *Tent in the Flemish Camp before* Oudenarde.

ELENA *and* CECILE.

ELENA (*singing*).

QUOTH tongue of neither maid nor wife
To heart of neither wife nor maid,
Lead we not here a jolly life
Betwixt the shine and shade?

Quoth heart of neither maid nor wife
To tongue of neither wife nor maid,
Thou wagg'st, but I am worn with strife,
And feel like flowers that fade.

There was truth in that, Cecile.

Cecile. Fie on such truth!
Rather than that my heart spoke truth in dumps
I'd have it what it is, a merry liar.

Elena. Yes, you are right; I would that I were merry!
Not for my own particular, God knows;
But for his cheer; he needs to be enliven'd;
And for myself in him; because I know
That often he must think me dull and dry,
I am so heavy-hearted, and at times
Outright incapable of speech. Oh me!
I was not made to please.

Cecile. Yourself, my Lady;
'Tis true to please yourself you were not made,
Being truly by yourself most hard to please;
But speak for none beside; for you were made,
Come gleam or gloom, all others to enchant,

Wherein you never fail.

Elena. Yes, but I do;
How can I please him when I cannot speak?
When he is absent I am full of thought,
And fruitful in expression inwardly,
And fresh and free and cordial is the flow
Of my ideal and unheard discourse,
Calling him in my heart endearing names,
Familiarly fearless. But alas!
No sooner is he present than my thoughts
Are breathless and betwitch'd, and stunted so
In force and freedom, that I ask myself
Whether I think at all, or feel, or live,
So senseless am I!

Cecile. Heed not that, my Lady;
Men heed it not; I never heard of one
That quarrell'd with his lady for not talking.
I have had lovers more than I can count,
And some so quarrelsome a slap in the face
Would make them hang themselves if you'd believe
But for my slackness in the matter of speech [them;
They ne'er reproach'd me: no, the testiest of them
Ne'er fish'd a quarrel out of that.

Elena. Thy swains
Might bear their provocations in that kind,
Yet not of silence prove themselves enamour'd.
But mark you this, Cecile: your grave and wise
And melancholy men, if they have souls,
As commonly they have, susceptible
Of all impressions, lavish most their love
Upon the blithe and sportive, and on such
As yield their want and chase their sad excess
With jocund salutations, nimble talk,
And buoyant bearing. Would that I were merry!

Mirth have I valued not before; but now
What would I give to be the laughing fount
Of gay imagination's ever bright
And sparkling phantasies! Oh, all I have,
(Which is not nothing though I prize it not,)
My understanding soul, my brooding sense,
My passionate fancy, and the gift of gifts
Dearest to woman which deflowering Time,
Slow ravisher, from clenched'st fingers wrings—
My corporal beauty, would I barter now
For such an antic and exulting spirit
As lives in lively women. Who comes hither?

Cecile. 'Tis the old Friar; he they sent abroad;
That ancient man so yellow! Od's my life!
He's yellower than he went. Note but his look;
His rind's the colour of a mouldy walnut.
Troth! his complexion is no wholesomer
Than a sick frog's.

Elena. Be silent; he will hear.

Cecile. It makes me ill to look at him.

Elena. Hush! hush!

Cecile. It makes me very ill.

Enter FATHER JOHN OF HEDA.

Father John. Your pardon, Lady:
I seek the Regent.

Elena. Please you, sit a while;
He comes anon.

Father John. This tent is his? *Elena.* It is.

Father John. [heard;
And likewise yours.—(*Aside.*) Yea, this is as I
A wily woman hither sent from France.
Alas! alas! how frail the state of man!
How weak the strongest! This is such a fall
As Samson suffer'd.

Cecile (*aside to* ELENA). How the friar croaks!
What gibbering is this?
Elena. May we not deem
Your swift return auspicious? Sure it denotes
A prosperous mission?
Father John. What I see and hear
Of sinful courses and of nets and snares
Encompassing the feet of them that once
Were steadfast deem'd, speaks only to my heart
Of coming judgments. . . .
Elena....Father, your words afflict me. [*Exit* CECILE.

Enter ARTEVELDE.

Artevelde (*as he enters*). Who is it says
That Father John is come? Ah! here he is.
Give me your hand, good Father! For your news,
Philosophy befriend me that I show
No strange impatience; for your every word
Must touch me in the quick.
Father John. To you alone
Would I address myself.
Artevelde. Nay, heed not her;
She is my Privy Councillor.
Father John. My Lord,
Such Councillors I abjure. My function speaks,
And through me speaks the Master whom I serve;
After strange women them that went astray
God never prosper'd in the olden time,
Nor will He bless them now. An angry eye
That sleeps not follows thee till from thy camp
Thou shalt have put away the evil thing.
This in her presence will I say——
Elena. Oh God!
Father John. That whilst a foreign leman——

Artevelde. Nay, spare her;
To me say what thou wilt.
Father John. Thus then it is:
This foreign tie is not to Heaven alone
Displeasing, but to those on whose firm faith
Rests under Heaven your all; 'tis good you know
It is offensive to your army—nay,
And justly, for they deem themselves betray'd
When circumvented thus by foreign wiles
They see their chief.
Elena. Oh! let me quit the camp.
Misfortune follows wheresoe'er I come;
My destiny on whomsoe'er I love
Alights: it shall not, Artevelde, on thee;
For I will leave thee to thy better star
And pray for thee aloof.
Father John. Thou shalt do well
For him and for thyself; the camp is now
A post of danger.
Elena. Artevelde! Oh God!
In such an hour as this—in danger's hour—
How can I quit thee?
Father John. Dost thou ask? I say,
As thou wouldst make his danger less or more
Depart or stay. The universal camp,
Nay more, the towns of Flanders are agape
With tales of sorceries, witcheries and spells,
That blind their chief and yield him up a prey
To treasons foul. How much is true or false
I know not and I say not: but this truth
I sorrowfully declare,—that ill repute
And sin and shame grow up with every hour
That sees you link'd together in these bonds
Of spurious love.

Elena. Father, enough is said.
Clerk's eyes nor soldier's will I more molest
By tarrying here. Seek other food to feed
Your pious scorn and pertinent suspicions.
Alien from grace and sinful though I be,
Yet there is room to wrong me. I will go
Lest this injustice done to me work harm
Unto my Lord the Regent.
Artevelde. Hold, I say;
Give me a voice in this. You, Father John,
I blame not, nor myself will justify:
But call my weakness what you will, the time
Is past for reparation. Now to cast off
The partner of my sin were further sin;
'Twere with her first to sin, and next against her.
And for the army, if their trust in me
Be sliding, let it go; I know my course;
And be it armies, cities, people, priests,
That quarrel with my love, wise men or fools,
Friends, foes, or factions, they may swear their oaths,
And make their murmur—rave, and fret, and fear,
Suspect, admonish—they but waste their rage,
Their wits, their words, their counsel: here I stand
Upon the deep foundations of my faith
To this fair outcast plighted, and the storm
That Princes from their palaces shakes out,
Though it should turn and head me, should not strain
The seeming silken texture of this tie.—
To business next:—Nay, leave us not, Beloved;
I will not have thee go as one suspect;
Stay and hear all. Father, forgive my heat,
And do not deem me stubborn. Now at once
The English news?
Father John. Your deeds upon your head!

EDWIN THE FAIR.

1842.

SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

LYRICS.

I.

(FROM ACT II., SCENE III.)

HEIDA (*sings to a harp*).

SHE was fresh and she was fair
Glossy was her golden hair;
Like a blue spot in the sky
Was her clear and loving eye.

He was true and he was bold,
Full of mirth as he could hold,
Through the world he broke his way
With jest and laugh and lightsome lay.

Love ye wisely, love ye well;
Challenge then the gates of Hell.
Love and truth can ride it out,
Come bridal song or battle shout.

II.

(FROM ACT II., SCENE V.)

SONG.

IN the hall of Leodwulf was made good cheer;
On the board was a bowl, by the wall was a spear;
The spear and the bowl looked each at each,
And the thoughts that rose in them wrought to speech.

Bowl.

Thou in the corner so grim and spare,
Who sent thee hither? What dost thou there?

Spear.

I came of the ash-tree Ygdrasil,
And do her bidding for woe or weal.

Bowl.

For whom the weal, for whom the woe?

Spear.

Say who thou art, and thou shalt know.

Bowl.

Broach the cask and fill me full—
I am the bold Logbrogdad's skull.

Spear.

Thou liest, or else thou leak'st; for once
I pierced the bold Logbrogdad's sconce.

Bowl.

I neither lie nor leak. Behold!
The hole is here and pieced with gold.

Spear.

I pray thee grace. 'Twas through that hole
Passed out the bold Logbrogdad's soul.

Bowl.

Then answer make that all may know,
For whom the weal, for whom the woe?

Spear.

The weal is theirs who do no wrong,
And crown with gifts the sons of song.
The woe is theirs who fain would flood
Their father's land with brethren's blood.
Their deeds the eagle and the kite
Shall judge, and God shall guard the right.

III.

(FROM ACT III., SCENE IV.)

THORBIORGA (*sings*).

By Wellesbourne and Charlcote ford,
At break of day, I saw a sword.
Wessex warriors, rank by rank,
Rose on Avon's hither bank,
Mercia's men in fair array
Looked at them from Marraway;
Close and closer ranged they soon,
And the battle joined at noon.

By Wellesbourne and Charlcote Lea
I heard a sound as of the sea:
Thirty thousand rushing men,
Twenty thousand met by ten;
Rang the shield and brake the shaft,
Tosty yelled, Harcather laughed;
Thorough Avon's waters red
Chased by ten the twenty fled.

By Charlcote ford and Wellesbourne
I saw the moon's pale face forlorn.
River flowed and rushes sighed,
Wounded warriors groaned and died;
Ella took his early rest,
The raven stood on his white breast;
Hoarsely in the dead man's ear
Raven whispered, "Friend, good cheer
Ere the winter pinch the crow
He that slew thee shall lie low.'

ST. CLEMENT'S EVE.

1862.

SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

(FROM ACT III., SCENE III.)

The Convent of the Celestines, Nuns and Novices at work embroidering vestments and altar-cloths.

Nun. No more prating and prattling. Come, Marceline, sing us one of thy holy songs, which is better than our babblement.

Novice. I will sing you the song of the Knight and the Dragon.

From men that naughty are and rude,
Save us, St. Gregory and St. Jude. *Amen.*

It begins so, Mother, and then it tells what happened.

Nun. Go on, child; truly 'tis a good beginning, and very necessary.

Novice.

A good Knight, hight Sir Vantadour,
Got on his horse and rode an hour;
Out of the city he rode amain,
And came to a forest that stood on a plain.

So full of wild beasts was that wood,
Enter it no man durst or could;
And those that did in twain were cleft,
And eaten up till nothing was left.

Through the wood the Knight rode forth
For half a day, from south to north;
When, lo! a Dragon he descried,
And on its back a Lady astride.

That Dame and Dragon were akin,
Pride was he and she was Sin;
The Dragon hiss'd and rear'd his crest,
The good Knight laid his lance in rest.

"Beware," said Sin, "for Pride is strong,
And mighty to uphold the wrong;
And woe to those that him attack,
Hissing, with me upon his back."

The Knight, he rode a-tilt and smote
The scaly Dragon in his throat;
The Dragon writhed and hiss'd and spat,
But nowise blench'd the Knight thereat.

Then call'd the Dragon from six caves
Six Blackamoors that were his slaves;
The Knight bade each and all advance,
And featly slew them with his lance,

Likewise the Dragon. Sin the while
No longer frown'd, but seem'd to smile;
And called six Syrens fair to sight,
Who flung their arms around the Knight.

But back he stepp'd, and "Lo!" said he,
"To fight with maids is not for me;
I know to fight where fame is won,
But now best courage is to run."

So first he fought, and then he ran,
Sir Vantadour, that righteous man:
And we from his ensample learn,
To flee from Sin and Pride to spurn.

Holy St. Gregory, grant us grace
To spurn at Sin and spit in her face. *Amen.*

Charles Jeremiah Wells.

1800—1879.

In the literary history of the nineteenth century little is more remarkable than the story of Charles Wells. To say that his career, in its positive and its negative aspects, was the inevitable outcome of his character, is but to shift the wonder a step further back. The man who when barely past his teens could produce such a work as "Joseph and his Brethren," and then make practically no further sign to the public for over half a century, until pressed to revise the work of his youth and give it forth again, must have been gifted by nature with an indolence and indifference to fame only surpassed by his genius. That his endowments amounted to nothing less than the "sacred fire" will be evident to anyone reading the following passages from his dramatic poem. Of his princely indolence and superb contempt for the world's good word, these notes must put on record such evidence as the material at command furnishes. If the record is but scant, this also is mainly due to his own wilful uncommunicativeness when in sight of the end of life: a bundle of his letters fuller of fire and originality than of facts, and a few articles in newspapers and magazines—notably those by Mr. Theodore Watts, Mr. W. J. Linton, and the late Mr. R. H. Horne—are the sum total of material ready to hand

for him who would essay to record somewhat concerning the one man of the nineteenth century who might have written plays worthy to be called "Shakespearian."

Charles Wells was born of middle-class parents, who gave him the not very fortunate baptismal name of Charles Jeremiah. According to his own statement in writing, 1800 was the year of his birth. In due course, deciding to bring him up for a learned profession, his parents sent him to the school of Mr. Clarke of Edmonton, at a time when Keats's younger brother Tom was there. This circumstance brought Wells acquainted not only with John Keats and many of his circle, but also with the future author of "Orion," Richard Henry Horne, with whom he was on terms of great affection in his youth, and again at the close of his life. He never was at the pains to be an apt scholar; but his natural powers of mind and his high animal spirits carried him through all the troubles of boyhood and brought him to the estate of a solicitor. There must have been ups and downs in his friendship with the Keatses as early as 1816; and these fluctuations would doubtless have arisen from the boisterous practical jocularity of Wells, and the natural tendency of Keats's fine nature to forgive what was not positively past forgiveness. The sonnet "To a Friend who sent me some Roses," which Keats published in his first volume of poems in 1817, was written in June 1816, and certainly suggests that there had even at that time been some small disagreement. However, in the ensuing winter of 1817-18, when Wells's people appear to have been living in Featherstone Buildings, Holborn, Keats and Wells were in

pleasant relations, dining, supping, visiting picture-shows and theatres together, and meeting at Hazlitt's lectures on English Poetry. Thus much is to be gathered from the allusions to Wells in Keats's published letters, which do not until the spring of 1819, after Tom Keats's death, show any sign of that bitter animosity nourished by the poet against their sometime friend on the discovery of full details concerning the hoax which Wells had perpetrated on the other poor boy. Of course, the imperturbable practical joker did not realize, as the highly sensitive Keats did, that what was fun to Wells was torture to Tom Keats.

Whether the final alienation had much to do with the production of Wells's first book, is a question affording food for speculation. It has been said that he was piqued into putting forth something which should show his sometime friend that he also could produce work worth reading. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that a common influence is prominent in Wells's first book and Keats's last, and also in a third delightful little volume by Keats's intimate friend John Hamilton Reynolds. The influence is that of Boccaccio; and the dates of the three books are suggestive enough. "Lamia, Isabella, the Eve of St. Agnes, and other Poems," came out in the summer of 1820, containing the wonderful "Pot of Basil" poem which was to have been associated with some poems from Boccaccio by Reynolds. In 1821 appeared "The Garden of Florence and other Poems," wherein, under his baptismal name of "John Hamilton," Reynolds issued two of the pieces which he had designed for the joint tribute to Boccaccio. And in 1822 Wells

published, anonymously, a little volume of 251 pages entitled "Stories after Nature." It seems unlikely that all these stories were produced after Keats's death in February 1821; and we may readily fancy young Wells, cognizant of the scheme of Keats and Reynolds, saying within himself — "Tribute to Boccaccio, quotha? I'll show these two fine fellows how a tribute to Boccaccio should be set about!" Truly these brief tales of passion, some pathetic, some tragic, are told with earnest brevity, and in language vigorous and sympathetic, often recalling the Hebrew scriptures, but in a method more akin to Boccaccio's than to that of any other writer. The book has a treasurable genuineness; but, so far as the public and the critics were concerned, it brought the young solicitor no encouragement.

To forestall any challenge of the position assigned to the "Stories after Nature" as Wells's first book, be it here recorded that the volume of "Dramas Adapted for the Representation of Juvenile Persons, by H. Howard," published by Messrs. Whittaker in 1820, and sometimes attributed by booksellers to the author of "Joseph and his Brethren," was disclaimed by Wells in the most positive terms, and, on his behalf, by his oldest friends. How long after writing the stories he waited before trying his hand at the drama and at verse, I cannot with certainty state. Wells wrote to me on the 27th of July 1875:—"I was twenty years old when I wrote this little poem: I am now seventy-five when I am called upon to recompose it—that is the word." It is at all events certain that, before the end of the year 1823, he had completed, and Messrs. G. & W. B. Whittaker had brought through the press, the dramatic poem by

which he will be known to posterity. This time he did not publish anonymously; but, since a budding attorney must avoid the appearance of dabbling in so evil a thing as literature, he did not use his own name. He could not very well follow the example of Keats's other lawyer friend, Reynolds, and use his twofold baptismal name; for "Joseph and his Brethren, by Charles Jeremiah," would have been too hopelessly suggestive of lamentation and mourning and woe: curiously enough, he chose the august patronymic which had lately appeared on the title-page of a publication of Messrs. Whittaker's; and this coïncidence has led to the false attribution referred to above. "Joseph and His Brethren, A Scriptural Drama; in two acts. By H. L. Howard," was put forth with the date 1824; but the Preface, the last part printed, is dated the 2nd of December 1823; and the back-label borne by perfect copies in the original boards is also dated 1823. Thus, whether it is a literal fact or not that he was only twenty when he wrote it, it is clear that, before he was twenty-four, he had brought out his second and last book, a poem showing such powers of thought and imagination as might have been the outcome rather of a genius sedulously cultivated through fifteen or twenty years of approved and applauded production, than of an indolently happy youth's more ardent moments.

But anything more unchastened than "Joseph and his Brethren" it has been the lot of but few poets to bring to the birth. Although for outpourings of pure poetry, the results of first-hand observation of life and nature, the work challenges the highest comparison, there was no serious attempt to endow

its teeming beauties with a compact and fitting form, very little care concerning such details as spelling and punctuation—which seem to have been left to some one, as Wells says, "more ignorant than" himself—and not too much attention to grammar or metrical exactness. Indeed it is said that Wells positively would not see the work through the press, and, once having written it and found a publisher, seemed to regard the whole thing very much as a joke. Certainly its treatment with that neglect which had been the fate of the "Stories after Nature" cannot have troubled him much; and he appears to have abandoned publication and the law with almost equal ease—though literature was not relinquished wholly and once for all.

His life from this time was peculiarly uneventful. He resided in the country, shot, fished, boated, and cultivated flowers. South Wales and the parts of Hertfordshire about Broxbourne were the scenes of these pursuits; and the late Mr. Smith Williams was associated with him in founding the Phœnix Boat Club. From about 1840 he lived in Brittany; and for some time he occupied a professorship at Quimper. He is said to have paid a flying visit to England about 1845; and between that time and 1850 he submitted to Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., through Mr. Smith Williams, a historical romance, which was not accepted. Mr. W. J. Linton, however, not only resuscitated some of the "Stories after Nature" in publications edited by him, but also printed a very remarkable story from Wells's pen, called "Claribel, a Tale of the Olden Time." This appeared in *The Illuminated Magazine* for December 1845, and was afterwards dramatized

by Mr. Linton and issued in his beautiful volume "Claribel and other Poems" (1865). Two papers entitled "A Boar-Hunt in Brittany" and "Love-Passages in the Life of Perron the Breton, a sequel to the Boar-Hunt in Brittany," published in *Fraser's Magazine* for October 1846 and June 1847, are also said to be the work of Wells. Thus it will be seen that the literary impulse was too vital to be quashed entirely. Indeed, it is certain that Wells produced at different times stories both short and long, poetry both epic and lyric. Mr. Horne recollected a tragedy entitled "Tancrede," and a poem called, I think, "Bacchus and Silenus" (but my note is partly obliterated); Mr. Linton saw, and decided not to publish, a most powerful tragic tale of love, faithlessness, jealousy, and vengeance; and in 1850 Wells's wife (he had married Miss Emily Jane Hill) was in London, trying to get a revised edition of "Joseph and his Brethren" published. Wells was evidently still capable of great concentrated efforts or ebullitions in creative literature. Even as late as 1875 he wrote to me "I am slow to move—but once afoot!——"

Before Mrs. Wells's visit to London, he had revised and interpolated "Joseph and his Brethren" with astonishing effect; but somehow, mysteriously the interpolated copy got lost, and the book was allowed to slumber for a while longer, notwithstanding efforts made by the late Dante Gabriel Rossetti and others to bring about its republication.

In 1875 Mr. Swinburne paid to Wells one of those ungrudging and keen-sighted tributes to genius of which so many are associated with the name of the author of "Atalanta in Calydon." His article in

The Fortnightly Review for February of that year had been written many years before, and was adorned by extracts from the lost interpolated copy; curiosity was again awakened; a publisher was found; and Wells's volcanic mind once more flamed into activity and produced a fresh revision. To me, a perfect stranger reported to him as an admirer of his great work, he awarded the interesting task of fitting the new version for the press; a brisk correspondence ensued; he shot at me by successive posts from Marseilles, where he was then living, ever fresh fragments and injunctions, but with *carte-blanche* to do whatever was needful.

From that time forward his letters were fairly frequent, sometimes concerning "Joseph and his Brethren," sometimes of other matters, including the theme of his literary doings at large. These, he said, had not been inconsiderable, in the course of his long life. On those occasions when the creative impulse had overpowered and annulled for the time being his constitutional indolence, he had produced works of various kinds in verse and prose, and had provided his own private temporary oblivion to which to consign them when the creative spasm passed. Finally, in or about 1874, after the death of his wife, that temporary oblivion, in corporal form a box, was exchanged for oblivion absolute, final, and irrevocable: he burnt his unpublished works—"sins of my youth," he calls them, "a novel—three volumes of stories—poems—one advanced epic!!! etc." Perhaps there was a shade of regret in his communication of this last act but one in the drama of his "life poetic"; for the communication was made when the sunshine of literary favour was falling pleasantly upon the second

birth of "Joseph and his Brethren"; but, if regret there was, it was the merest shade; and he allowed himself a final compensation in once more interpolating new scenes and speeches into his revived poem. His copy of the 1876 edition, much swollen, lies before me. The still unpublished portions of it bristle with bad spelling, shaky grammar, defective punctuation, metric irregularity, and even forms of speech which he himself disliked and denounced, while too idle to revise when the fit was off. But (and what a "but"!) up and down the pages and pages of cramped and crabbed manuscript, written upon thin "foreign" note-paper, flashes the lightning of that inextinguishable mental vigour; and now and again out blaze the very passion and ferment of youth, vital and manifest, although the old and stiffening hand was but too painfully recording the dictates of the brain, strong, masculine, and self-possessed to the point of despotism. The book thus worked upon bears a fresh title and dedication. "Sephenath-Phaanech" is the new name, "the historical title," says Wells, "instituted by Pharaoh." The manuscript dedication runs thus:—

"DEDICATED
TO
THE AUTHOR OF 'ORION,'
R. H. HORNE,
MY FIRST FRIEND IN 1810
AND MY LAST FRIEND IN 1878.
THE AUTHOR."

When the time comes for republishing this work, the poet's arguments on some of the enlargements

will be forthcoming, with much other matter of a sufficiently fascinating interest.

Wells's discrimination of character throughout the work, whether in its first, its second, or its final state, is of the very essence of the dramatic faculty. The early scenes between Joseph and his brothers, however little adapted for representation, are masterly both in the individual handling of the several characters, and in the vivid perception of surroundings. The character of Phraxanor, the wife of Potiphar, is a still higher flight of creation: she is of the great unflinching women of all literature: she lives in that strenuous sense in which Medea, Clytemnestra, Cleopatra, Brynhild, Gudrun, and Hallgerda Long-coat live. The unpublished version depicts her in her fall and degradation, as well as in her power, and leaves her the same complete and consistent character, once known, never to be forgotten.

There are few pages of "Joseph and his Brethren" that are not instinct with high criticism of life and vitalized by poetic utterances, in which true thought is recorded with rare felicity of expression. One of Wells's qualities the work does not show—his humour: indeed a charge of deficiency in this respect might well be based upon the positive and negative evidence of his dramatic poem. And yet he had really a most notable humour. It is on record that his conversation was irresistible; and his letters are certainly as remarkable on the humorous side as on any other. They show further that, as he approached the term of life, he maintained not only the cheerful view of all things which had characterized him throughout, but also a conviction

that the work on which his volcanic energy had thrice flamed up, to die down again to the level of an abnormally equable temperament, would live into the far future. He used the playful term "Joe" to designate himself and his work indifferently; and of Phraxanor he wrote as "Phraxy": one of his latest injunctions connected with a future edition was this:

"In stopping Joe—if another fifty years does not (and it will not) stop him—get rid of all the dones and dids and thou and thines you possibly can.

"For ever and a day yours,

"JOSEPH."

A strange view, this implies, of the relative positions of poet and editor; but it is wholly characteristic. Towards the end he wrote of his health—"It is not only so-so,—but so-so! so-o-o-o." He explained that a painful and incurable malady had completely "laid" him "by the heels." In reply to questions as to his material comfort he wrote from Marseilles—

"I have the first society here and the first salons open to me—but can't enjoy it—perfectly isolated—having nothing and wanting nothing—inhabiting one of my apartments—one bed—no servant—and *done for* by the family below. From my former habit of life it is a terrible come-down in one year. Nevertheless when any of 'em are depressed, they come to me to be screwed up—and always go away merry and laughing.—For me, I am as cheerful as the day is long. It is saying much for it is often

very long indeed. It is a fixed infirmity—there is certainty of worse but no hope of better. . . .

"Adieu, my good and excellent friend—

"JOE."

These brief extracts show very vividly the spirit in which Charles Wells faced life and death—how he accepted the universe and himself for what they were, with no hankering after a change of relations. It was in those apartments at No. 2 Montée des Oblats, Jardin de la Colline, Marseilles, from which the new "Joseph and his Brethren" had been indited, that the undaunted spirit passed away on the 17th of February 1879. The world may interest itself in Wells much or little according to its mood; but one thing it cannot hope to do—it can never "look upon his like again."

H. BUXTON FORMAN.

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

CHARLES JEREMIAH WELLS.

(Act II., Scene 3.)

The house of Potiphar. Phraxanor (Potiphar's *Wife*) *and* Attendant.

Phraxanor. Dost thou despise love, then?
Attendant. Madam, not quite;
A ruby that is pure is better worth
Than one that's flaw'd and streaked with the light:
So is a heart.
Phrax. A ruby that is flaw'd
Is better worth than one that's sunk a mile
Beneath the dry sand of some desert place:
So is a heart.
Attend. Then, madam, you would say
That there is nothing in the world but love.
Phrax. Not quite: but I would say the fiery sun
Doth not o'ershine the galaxy so far;
Nor doth a torch within a jewel'd mine
Amaze the eye beyond this diamond here,
More than the ruddy offices of love
Do glow before the common steps of life.
Attend. It is a knowledge worth the stooping for.
Phrax. The soul's supremacy admits no sex:
I am a woman, and am proud of it.
We are content that man shall take the lead,

Knowing he ever will look back on us
With doting eye, not caring how he steps.
Walking thus blindly, we may guide him so
That he shall turn which way shall please us best:
So we can beckon him where'er we will,
And lead him ever round about his grave,
And in, whene'er we list.—
All matters that are greater than ourselves
Do trace their secret graces to our hands.
For glory captains struggle in the fight,
And play against the bulwark of the foe
The o'erbrowing engines in the stubborn siege;
But love doth brace the garland on his head,
Making proud victory sweeter than it is.
What warlike prince did doff his laurel yet
But he did cast it in some fair maid's lap,
Saying—"My greatness I commit to thee,
Mistress of it, and me, and my proud heart?
He who has won whate'er he still desir'd
Strewing his path with flowers of sweet success,
Is yet a poor and melancholic man,
Sad as a beggar craving in a porch,
Being denied the woman he does love.
Love doth attach on independency:
Bravery of suits enriching the bright eye,
Sweetness of person, pleasure in discourse,
And all the reasons why men love themselves;
Nay, even high offices, renown, and praise,
Greatness of name, honour of men's regard,
Power and state and sumptuous array,
Do pay a tribute at the lips of love,
Fetching their freshness and their darling grace
From woman's approbation,—waiting still
Close to her elbow till she please to smile

Upon the cause whereof the man is proud,
And say that it is well : our witchery
Doth claim their rarity, as our prime jest :
Tho' but the footstool of a royal king,
When we betray and trip him to the earth
His crown doth roll beneath us.—Horses have not
Such power to grace their lords or break their necks,
As we, for we add passion to our power.
They think us gentle, second unto them,
And blind them to the wheels whereon we work.
Our will is the strong rudder to our bark ;
Our wit, the sails ; beauty, the swelling tide ;
Caprice, the tackle, serving to all winds,—
Tho' light as nothing, yet it tells like truth ;
And constancy, the anchor that's upheav'd,
For ever falling and yet never struck.
Thus do we voyage o'er the fickle world,
Marking our image upon every wave,
Still moving onward to what port we will.
Ay, there it is ! who can control our wills ?
Judgment and knowledge, grey-beard wisdom, are
Devoted straw unto our burning will.—
We will not fear : and if we spy a toy
We'll reach it from the moon, with sudden hand—
Why—what shall stop us in our enterprise ?

Attend. Madam, your speech is fire.

Phrax. Doth it burn you ?

Attend. I did not think that I had liv'd so long
As I have liv'd.

Phrax. Indeed !—why do you blush ?

Attend. Because I never dar'd to trust my thought,
And, lo ! it has escap'd.

Phrax. Do you, then, love ?

Attend. In sooth I ever fear'd to call it love :

I knew a minstrel who had fallen in love,
And, though he sung the more his plaintive notes,
Yet never was he merry any more.
Phrax. A wanton waste of frail mortality
To keep the portal of a sepulchre,
And wet a pleading lute with mellow tears,
And hoop the heart with melancholy strains!
That man does doat upon his very grief;—
The gaudy-colour'd story of his mind,
Imagination, is his bed-fellow,
The past and future being both forgot,
The precious present running all to waste.
There is an ancient fashion in the world,—
E'en sigh and choose again.
Attend. This may be well.
Phrax. It is the five fold custom of the day.
Attend. One flower in my bosom were enough,
And I have got one in my memory
I would not part with for a wilderness.
Oh! it is delicate and lovely too,
Beyond the grossness of this heartless world.
Your pardon, madam, in all your chronicles
I never knew you credit your own sex
For perfect truth.
Phrax. Because it is a fable.
Attend. I hope not, madam.
Phrax. Nay! it is a fable:
Give me your arm over these ivory steps,—
I'll sit in my lord's high seat, and prove it so.
Truth is sublime; the unique excellence;
The height of wisdom, the supreme of power,
The principle and pivot of the world,
The keystone that sustains the archèd heavens;
And Time, the fragment of Eternity,

Eternity itself, but fills the scale
In truth's untrembling hand. His votaries
Belong to him entire, not he to them;
The immolation must be all complete,
And woman still makes reservation.
Our feeling doth resemble the king's coin,
No counterfeit, for it doth bear our weight,
The perfect image, absolute, enthron'd:
Now, the king's coin belongs to many men,
And only by allowance is call'd his:
Just so our feeling stands with circumstance.
Whene'er the king doth give a golden mark,
The addition is the image of himself.
'Tis so with woman's feeling—mark me well;
'Tis true we have the power to love and hate,
Indulge antipathies and sympathies;
But power to pierce through thought to absolute truth,—
Man's reasoning imagination,—still
Is compromis'd in our maternal sex;
Ours is a present, not an abstract power;
And, with it, so much art, which, in a woman,
Did never fail to make a giant kneel.
If Art and Honesty do run a race,
Which tumbles in the mire? Ask those who starve.
Love is the purest essence of our souls,
And who can tell how many modest maids
Have paid its tribute in an early tomb,
The martyrs of our proper sacrifice!
Question the practice and I do avouch,
So marr'd is Nature, that this constancy
(The rarest jewel that the world can boast)
Is the fine failing of our weaker sex;
For men affirm, and I believe it too,
That Truth is greater than the world beside:

Therein we flag, herein our weakness faints:
Meekness and patience, tenderness and love,
These qualities are our inheritance;
Knowledge and wisdom, love of truth and power,
Are the strong engines in the heart of man.
Our chiefest virtue is our fortitude:
Yet maids who die in love do lack it much,
Showing the world a bauble to their griefs.
Our chiefest power is our stubborn will,
Which we do lack the constancy to check,
Seeing it is our agent and not Truth's,
A giant dwarf, to forage for ourselves.
Therefore, since Truth requires that I should lay
Me prostrate at her foot and worship her,
Rather than wield her sceptre and her power,
I shall be bold to follow mine own way,
And use the world as I find wit and means;
And as I know of nothing but old age
To bound my will, so nothing will I fear.—
But I waste words: you do not understand.

Attend. Madam! assuredly your speech doth sound
Like sense—I cannot tell——

Phrax. Silence, no more.
Suppose you did expect the man you love
To wait on you about this place and time,
What habit and behaviour would you use?

Attend. Were I, like you, a lady of estate,
I would adorn my brow with a bright star
Of crusted diamond's lustre—stain'd with gold,
Like to a frosted sunflower, when the morn
Blinks in the east, and plays upon its front.
My hair should bear a tiara of bright gems;
And all my velvet should be loop'd about
With colours blending into harmony.

I would sip water fragranc'd with sweet gum,
To give my breathing sweetness. Half-reclin'd,
I would receive him with a free discourse
Which he should lead, wherein I'd acquiesce.

Phrax. Ah. child! there lies more mischief in a smile
Than in the king's own house, and all his waste
Of wreathèd gold and weighty jewelry.—
Come, help to dress me straight.

Attend. What fashion, madam ?

Phrax. The sultry hour well suits occasion ;—
That silk of gossamer like tawny gold—
Throw it on loosely :—so, 'tis well ; yet stay,—
See to the neck ; fit thou some tender lace
About the rim. The precious jewel shown
But scantily is oft desirèd most,
And tender nets scare not the timid bird.
A little secret is a tempting thing
Beyond wide truth's confession.—Give me flowers
That I may hang them in my ample hair ;
And sprinkle me with lavender and myrrh.
Zone me around with a broad chain of gold,
And wreath my arms with pearls—So—this will do—
And in good time, for yonder Joseph comes, [*Aside.*
Which saves me the command to bring him here :
Give me a cup of wine.

Attend. Amber or purple ?

Phrax. Amber with the spice of Araby.—
I hear his measur'd yet elastic step
Staidly advance along the corridor,
And from this damask'd alcove unobserv'd
Can contemplate his beauty as he comes.
What thoughtful wisdom in that face of youth
Blending in sweetness and in harmony ;
An eye that beams with gravity and fire,—

Too much of that:—that must be tam'd, subdued
To the great secret,—charm'd to oblivion:—
That marble front a veinèd tablet fair,
Whereon my lips shall trace my history;
His hair of that rare tint, nor black nor brown,
Of olive amber'd in the sun's bright rays,
That love to linger in its massy folds,
Which o'er his shoulders, like a vexèd wave,
Rolls in disorder'd order, gracefully
Meandering and curling on itself.
Youthful perfection, like a bursting rose,
Glows into manhood, and yet lingers still
In the proportions fine of moulding power,
Partaking of the flower and the bud.
A living grace, repose in action,
O'erclouds him like an element divine:
A fabled angel waiting for his wings,—
Surely this man's inspired!—
In his retiring modesty lies hid
A secret charm of native innocence.
Ah! too much virtue is a naughty crime
That never yet grew old in this grey world.
Oh! for an artist with a subtle hand,
A soul inflam'd, ahunger'd of renown,
To deck my chamber with this undrap'd grace!
Lo! I find nature is a novelty,—
The silken study of a courtier's life,
Fading before this youth's simplicity.

Enter JOSEPH.

Joseph. Madam, so please——

Phrax. I'll hear thee by and by.
Myrah, depart;—yet stay, and first arrange
My sandal, that unseemly doth escape.
Higher still there, where the transparent silk

Tapers towards the ankle. Have a care;
Let me not have to chide this fault again.
[*Exit* Attendant.
Joseph. Madam, I have a message from my lord.
Phrax. Put that to rest. Give me that golden box,
'Tis fill'd with precious spikenard, queen of scents.
[*She spills it on his head.*
Joseph. Madam, what must I say? My state is low,
Yet you do treat me as you might my lord
When he besought your hand.
Phrax. Must I get up,
And cast myself in thy sustaining arms,
To sink thee to a seat?—Come, sit thou here.
Now I will neighbour thee and tell thee why
I cast that ointment on thee.
Joseph. I did not
Desire it.
Phrax. You did ask me for it.
Joseph. Madam!
Phrax. You breath'd upon me as you did advance,
And sweets do love sweets for an offering.
My breath is sweet and subtle, yet I dar'd
Not put my lips half close enough to thine
To render back the favour; so I say
The obligation did demand as much—
Why, what amaze is now upon thy face—
Will nothing please?
Joseph. Madam, your arm—pray move.
Phrax. You peevish bird—like a sick eagle I
Could fain devour, but may not.
Joseph. I beseech you,
If you respect your place, or my fair name,
Undo your prisoning arms and let me go.
Phrax. Tremble to fear the woman you might love.

Joseph. Indeed, I would far sooner honour her.

Phrax. Cold, cold, still cold ;—I eye you like to one
That dieth in my arms: beware you chill
Me too: You do a wrong, and herein court
Much danger. I would risk the world for you ;
But blow me cold with your sharp frosty breath,
And these same arms that gird you round about
May turn to bitter chains. We are most dear
In our affections ; in vengeance most resolv'd.

Joseph. Madam. I have a spirit beyond fear.
God knows the duty that I owe your lord
Would break my heart did I commit this sin.
But madam, hear the reason that I have,
Why my lord's honour dearer is than life.
I do remember me, when first I came
Into this land of Egypt, fugitive,
Forlorn, and wretched, bruisèd at the heart,
An iron collar round about my neck,
Degrading mark of bitter servitude,
Stall'd in the press of slaves upon the mart,
Brimful of misery unto the crown,
Forlorn, cast out, abandon'd, and bereav'd,
A certain man did look into my face,
As though to penetrate my very soul.
By slow degrees conviction work'd on him,
And through my sufferings he read my heart,
And all his features melted at the sight.
A sacred pity stole into his eyes,
That dwelt on me in gentle tenderness.
Oh ! balm of sweetness, what a holy joy
Pour'd like a flood into my thousand wounds
Of soul and body's sore affliction,
Whereof I languish'd in my pilgrimage !
With his own hands he drew my collar off,

Nor barter'd with the merchant for my price.
He took me to his house, put me in trust,
Justly and wisely kept his eyes on me,
Weighing with care my actions and desert,
And by degrees receiv'd me to his breast,
O'erloaded me with benefits, and chang'd
A chain of iron for a chain of gold,
A wolf-skin kirtle for a purple cloak,
A life of wretchedness for one of peace,
A broken heart to love and tenderness.
This man, so full of human charities,
Had many precious treasures, which he gave
To me in trust, but far above the rest
Was one in which all others were absorb'd,
As in a holy consecrated shrine,
Source of his life, his honour's nourishment,
The loss of which would be a fell decree
Of shame, despair, and infamy, and death.
Madam! this honour'd honourable man,
Was noble Potiphar, your lord and mine.
Need I add more?—
I pray you let us talk on common things.

Phrax. Neither I am not beautiful, perhaps,—
Set up to be the universal fool.
Why, here's a waste of parti-colour'd words—
High-sounding phrases, empty eloquence.
"My lord!—my lord."—It scenteth of reproach.
Sir, have a care—blood waits on insult, ha!
One way or other I will have your heart.

Joseph. This wondrous creature is of faultless mould, [*Aside.*
And grace plays o'er the movement of her limbs,
Her marvellous beauty irresistible,
A double charm, abandons languishment,

In soft repose, hints at oblivion.
In motion her imperious dignity,
At secret hours, might dictate to the king.
A most unscrupulous voluptuousness
Mars Nature in her marvellous qualities:
A fascinating monster, fatal equally
In action or reaction of her love;
Fair flower of poisonous perfume, born to kill.
Never the demon had an agency
Where he had nought to do in work that's done.
Take pity on yourself, on me, on him— [*Aloud.*
On me, for you would hate me mortally
When once you were awaken'd from this dream,
To see the hideous monster you had made.
So utterly impossible this seems,
That I am prone to think it is a feint
To try my truth and prove my honesty.

Phrax. Ah! 'tis a feint that burns my body up,
And stirs my spirit like a raging sea.
Think you to pay in words?—deeds—deeds!
For I can tell you that you have in hand
One who will have no debts.

Joseph. It is enough.
'Tis time this hopeless contest had an end.
I have borne this besieging patiently,
Still hoping to arouse your modesty.
Oh! do not force the loathing that lies hid
Within my gall to rush into my face.

Phrax. This is the greatest blessing that you shun.

Joseph. Or the worst sin.

Phrax. Oh! weigh not with such scales!

Joseph. Oh! madam, have a care.

Phrax. Listen, or else
I'll set my little foot upon thy neck;—

Thou art like a beautiful and drowsy snake,
Cold, and inanimate, and coil'd around
Upon a bank of rarest sun-blown flowers.
My eye shall be the renovating sun——
Joseph. Madam, forbear: I'm sick to think on it.
Phrax. You overdo this art, for Nature sure
Never did put disgust upon a lip
So near a woman's: an empoison'd cup
Might curdle all the features of thy face,
But this same blandishment upon my brow
Could never chase the colour from thy cheeks.
Joseph. Love, being forc'd, so sickeneth the sense,
That dull monotony is nothing to it.—
A pallid appetite is sweeter far
Than shockèd modesty and fierce distaste.
Phrax. You are too dead a weight.
Joseph. Why, let me go.
Phrax. My arms are faint; smile thou, they're ribs of steel.
Joseph. The sun ne'er shinèd in a pitch-black night.
Phrax. Oh! ignorant boy, it is the secret hour
The sun of love doth shine most goodly fair.
Contemptible darkness never yet did dull
The splendour of love's palpitating light.
At love's slight curtains, that are made of sighs,
Though e'er so dark, silence is seen to stand
Like to a flower closèd in the night;
Or, like a lovely image drooping down
With its fair head aslant and finger rais'd,
And mutely on its shoulder slumbering.
Pulses do sound quick music in Love's ear,
And blended fragrance in his startled breath
Doth hang the hair with drops of magic dew.
All outward thoughts, all common circumstance,

Are buried in the dimple of his smile:
And the great city like a vision sails
From out the closing doors of the hush'd mind.
His heart strikes audibly against his ribs
As a dove's wing doth freak upon a cage,
Forcing the blood athro' the crampèd veins
Faster than dolphins do o'ershoot the tide.
Cours'd by the yawning shark. Therefore I say
Night-blooming Ceres, and the star-flower sweet,
The honeysuckle, and the eglantine,
And the ring'd vinous tree that yields red wine,
Together with all intertwining flowers,
Are plants most fit to ramble o'er each other,
And form the bower of all-precious Love,
Shrouding the sun with fragrant bloom and leaves
From jealous interception of Love's gaze.—
This is Love's cabin in the light of day—
But oh! compare it not with the black night,—
Delay thou sun, and give me instant night—
Its soft, mysterious, and secret hours;
The whitest clouds are pillows to bright stars,
Ah! wherefore shroud thine eyes.

Joseph. Madam, for shame!—

Phrax. Henceforth, I'll never knit with glossèd bone,
But interlace my fingers among thine,
And ravel them, and interlace again,
So that no work that's done content the eye,
That I may never weary in my work.

Joseph. Would that my lord were come!

Phrax. Thy hair shall be
The silken trophy of the spirit of Love,
Where I will lap, fair chains, my wreathèd arms.

Joseph. What's to be done? Madam, give way,
I pray you.

Phrax. Beware! you'll crack my lace.
Joseph. You will be hurt.
Phrax. Oh! for some savage strength!
Joseph. Away! away!
Phrax. So, you are loose—I pray you kill me—do!
Joseph. Let me pass out at door.
Phrax. I have a mind
You shall at once walk with those honest limbs
Into your grave.
Joseph. Are you a lady, madam?
Phrax. I was so, but I am a dragon now:
My nostrils are stuff'd full of splenetive fire;
My tongue is turn'd into a furious sting,
With which I'll strike you—Ha! be sure I will.
Joseph. Madam, I did desire you no offence.
Phrax. Death and perdition, no!
Joseph. Your love is lost on me,
And I refus'd your offer; which was wise.
Phrax. Oh! was it so? have you so much scorn left?
Unload it in my lap—let me have all,
That I may hate with cause, Malice is proud,
Nor yields to trifles—nay, despise me more.
Joseph. I ne'er despised the lady of my lord,—
Only her vice.
Phrax. My lord—my lord—canst thou
Not mouth that word distinctly from my lady?
My lord!—He surely shall be paid full home
That honours lords above a lady's love.
Thou hast no lord but me,—I am thy lord:
And thou shalt find it, too—fool that I
To stoop my stateliness to such a calf
Because he bore about a panther's hide.
That is not blood which fainteth in thy veins,
But only infant milk. Thou minion!

Bought up for drudgery with idle gold,
How dar'st thou look or wink thy traitorous eye,
Much less to think, when I command thy will?
Oh, impudence! to scorn a noble dame!
Were't not that royalty has kiss'd my hand
I'd surely strike thee.

Joseph. Madam! be temperate.

Phrax. Who bade thee speak, impudent slave? beware!
I'll have thee whipp'd,—Oh! I am mad to think
That ever I should bring myself to scorn
For such a stubborn minion as thou art.
Ha!—thou mere shadow—wretched atomy!—
Fill'd full of nothing—making a brave show,
Like to a robe blown with the boastful wind—
Thou worse than ice, for that melts to the sun—
Disgrace to Egypt and her feverish air—
Thou shalt not stay in Egypt.

Joseph. I grieve at that.

Phrax. I am chang'd. Thou shalt stay here—and since I see
There is no spirit of life in all this show,
Only a cheat unto the sanguine eye,
Thou shalt be given to the leech's hands
To study causes on thy bloodless heart
Why men should be like geese.—A pretty pass
I've brought my dauntless spirit to. These knees,
That ne'er did bend but to pluck suitors up,
And put them out of hope—Oh! I am mad—
These feet by common accident have trod
On better necks than e'er bow'd to the king;
And must I tie them in a band of list
Before a slave like thee?

Joseph. Still I look honestly.

Phrax. Thy looks are grievous liars, like my eyes;
They juggled me to think thou wert a man.
If seeming make men thou art one indeed.
Seeming, forsooth! Why, what hadst thou to do,
When thou might'st feast thy lips on my eyelids,
To hang thy head o'er thy left shoulder thus
(Like to a madman doting on a straw
Past the wide wonder of the precious world),
Blinking at Honesty, and so beguil'd
With its full semblance stuff'd with nothing real;
While I, like a congealed icicle
Or some dull yew-tree brooding o'er a grave,
Was shunn'd avoidably?—Thou Honesty!
Like the arm'd tooth within the gilded snake,
Making its beauty fear'd and yet admir'd,
For that its poison is of precious use,
Thou that mak'st nothing of a dame like me,
Show me thy proper pet, that when one such
In all her soberness may meet my eye,
I may prepare to burn her with my gaze,
And twit her with my scorn.

Joseph. Honest women
Are made of tender stuff, and yet too tough
To warp or quail before the eye of vice.
Madam, have you no shame?

Phrax. Nor will not have:
When crownèd with success, shame laughs aloud;
When conquer'd, shame is of itself asham'd.
I am grown childish and inconsequent; [*Aside.*
Why, what have I to scan that's critical?
My wounded spirit is benumb'd and bruis'd,
And seeks to lose itself in wandering.
I may be vanquish'd, but never will be weak.
Thou art not form'd to love, but ever to be lov'd. [*Aloud.*

Joseph. [*Aside.*
This fascinating danger walls me round,
Leaving no door that's open to escape.
She's gone too far for one who ne'er recedes,
And her blind passion, as a torch illum'd,
Will ne'er recoil before explosion.
A single hope remains invisible,
A silken thread to carry all this weight.
Could I allume a virtuous fire in time,
We were all sav'd! Ah! feeble enterprise,
Dangerous as hopeless: Eloquence and Truth
Befriend me in this dire extremity!
'Tis true there is a common name call'd love;
[*Aloud.*
But love and love is union opposite,
Two flames of different colour and of heat,
One that consumes and one again that charms,
Pure element of continuity.
Fancy's inconsistent idol still remains,—
All is not love in sensuality,—
A day's beginning and a month to end.

Phrax. Why, here is heyday logic! 'tis this hour
That I am born; through all my flowery youth
I have been following a miracle,
A solid, consequent, substantial dream;
Ha! Ha! forgive me, Joseph, that I laugh;
Thou art the strangest nothing I e'er saw.

Joseph. As nothing, then, let me be entertain'd,
And leave me to my own oblivion.
Seeing that nothing can commit no sin,
Enough for me my insignificance.

Phrax. I am not curious, yet fain would catch
This light aerial exposition.

Joseph. And to what end? Alas! it were in vain;

In measure we advance our roads divide,
And only tend to the Antipodes.
Your soul and body own but one idea,
Nor mine: each tendance,—light and darkness dire!
Phrax. Now by all nature I *am* curious.
Lest you suppose me taken in your net
Of phrases form'd of silken gossamer,
I pray you deign to aid my ignorance.
Joseph. The first great attribute is modesty,
Source of self-government and self-respect:
'Tis ever delicate—in giving all
Seems to give nothing, hence equality;
Consciousness absorb'd in sympathy
Is ever present abnegation,
And therefore generous in tenderness;
The fire that burns is intellectual,
So mind and body are combin'd in one—
Altar of constancy, high honour's throne,
Where reigns in confidence its lord elect.
This said, 'tis virtue,—all unsaid is vice,
Be it within or else without the laws;
The heart is not a gallery to hang
A line of portraits equal fair and false,
A gaudy history of sin and shame.
Phrax. Is there still more of this most precious woof?
The spinning out would take a summer's day.
Joseph. Yes, madam, there is more: still a last word
To waste like those that have preceded it,
One supreme thought that you have never had,
One that my courage fails me to divulge
Without your special approbation.
Phrax. Joseph lack courage?—Joseph's courage fail?
I of all beings cannot credit that;
But since you say in doleful verity

I am the source of this fine energy,
Not only I consent, but do command.
Joseph. Wedlock, altho' abandon'd and forgot,
Still lives in archives and in chronicles;
Word of reproach to all duplicity.
Why marry, being free? Is't that to-morrow
May mock to-day,—that the reputed son
Should shame the sire,—a living lie to all
Posterity,—inheriting the curse,
Dishonouring the line of ancestry?
Passion cosmopolite poisons the eye,
And demons pass for gods,—the vicious,
The vile, the abandon'd, and perchance *the slave*!
Depository of a glorious race,
There breathes not on the earth a nobler man
Than your large-hearted and confiding lord.
Think on your vows! Be constant and be wise!
Phrax. Well, have you ended? Is there nothing more?
Joseph. Or rather, madam, nothing has been said.
Phrax. Grace! Grace! You grow so dull and tedious
That if it were not for my traitorous eyes
You'd cure me of this passion thro' my ears.
Speak, and be brief.—
Joseph. There lacks equality;
If, madam, with a virgin heart you woo'd,
Unknowing all in native innocence,
Seeking a virgin heart to correspond,
Tho' somewhat bold, a fascination still
Might breed compassion, sympathy, and love
Wherein a shock'd imagination
Had neither rival nor co-partnership.
Yet you ask all; and think it much to give

(Enthron'd on your offended dignity)
A yet divided subdivided half,—
A soul beyond a body, if you will,
But rather say a soulless body's zest,—
A self-consuming sacrificing fire
Without an echo to its egotism
(Still I insist there's no quality)—
A flickering and vacillating flame,
Feeding the summer embers of the blood,
Where spring and autumn are alike unknown,
And winter waits with palsied icy hand,
Eager to gather up the parchèd bones,
And prematurely cast them to a grave
Where gapes eternity!—
I am not the senseless creature you suppose,
But stand upon my honour, and will have
Substance unshadow'd—either all or none.

Phrax. The great magician has laid by his wand,
The circle of his magic art is run,
Would you have my opinion of all this?
'Tis—that we waste our time on idle words.
Oh! I have been a fool to rave about—
I have mistook my passion all this while.
Thou implement of honesty, it is
Not scorn but laughter that is due to thee.
I'll keep thee as an antic, that when dull
Thou may'st kill heavy time.—Look up, thou slave:
A woman's pity lodges by remorse:
I never knew a danger I did fear.
Think'st thou that honesty will save thee now
From ignominious death?

Joseph. God knows, not I;
I never will be guilty of disgrace;
If it do come, I'll bear it as I've borne

Your burthens; sweat I may,—never complain.
Phrax. Dry as a wild boar's tongue in honesty—
And yet that hath an essence tending to
Its savage growth. Thou shock of beaten corn!
Thou hollow pit, lacking a goodly spring,
Tempting the thirsty soul to come and drink,
Then cheating him with dust and barrenness!
Thou laughable affection of man's form!
Joseph. Madam, you beat the air; your sarcasm keen
Preceding your revenge touches me not;
Your wrath still glances o' the dangerous side,
And hits yourself.
Phrax. Are all these Canaanites
Like you? ha!
Joseph. An they were, 'twere no disgrace.
Phrax. I'll prick my arm, and they shall suck the blood,
To make men of them—for a need, I trow.
Ah! you poor temperate and drowsy drone—
You empty glass—you baulk to eyes, lips, hands—
Ha! ha! I will command the masons straight
Hew you in stone and set you on the gate,
Hard by the public walk where dames resort;
Therein you shall fool more admiring eyes
(A plague upon the embers in my throat),
For you fool'd mine, and I like company.
It is the proper stuff whereof you're made,
Your colour and your heat are counterfeit,
Like a stone image, fit to be admir'd,
But rather to be mock'd than to be lov'd—
There shall you stand, the mark of my contempt.
Joseph. You do me bitter wrong—unlady-like—
A scourgeable, a scarlet-hooded wrong,
When thus you pack my shoulders with your shame.

Phrax. Ha! have I touch'd thee? art thou sensible?
I prythee do not fret, my pretty lute;
I shall shed tears, sweet music, if thou fret.
Thou shalt be free, like a rare charmèd snake,
To range a woman's secret chamber thro'—
Here, take my mantle, gird it o'er thy loins,
And steep thy somewhat brownèd face in milk:
I have a sister, a young tender thing,
To her I will prefer thee, a she squire,
To brace her garments, and to bleach her back
With sweet of almonds. A dull parrot thou!
Tiring her idle ear, and gaping for
An almond for thy pains. May the huge snake
That worships on the Nile, enring and crush thee!

Joseph. This may be well, but it affects not me.

Phrax. Oh! madam, do not fret—madam, I say.

Joseph. Oh, peace! you pass all bounds of modesty.

Phrax. Pray write upon thy cap "This is a man"—
A plague and the pink fever fall on thee!
I am thrown out: thou'st nettled me outright.—
Who knocks there? wait awhile, the door is fast—
Nay, stand thou here! I will not let thee pass.

Enter Attendant.

Attendant. Madam, the noble Potiphar's return'd.

Joseph. My business was to tell you of this thing,
But your great passion still o'erflooded it.

Phrax. I'm sick of two extremes, both desperate.
[*Aside.*
Tameness doth lodge in dove-cots in a farm;
Spleen, with wild eagles, in the mountain pines.
I'll purchase nothing of this pale tameness:
I cannot sue again without disgrace.—
Yet I would sooner conquer on my knee
Than yield me with a crown upon my head

To the blank issue of my foil'd desire.
I am unus'd to this weak tenderness,
This soft return where folly mocks itself:
With closèd eyes I laugh myself to scorn,—
Open I dote past life's identity.
My passive blood springs sudden to my heart,
Seeking for Joseph in each burning vein.
Oh! dream personified of waking sleep,
Enchaining charm of body and of mind,
Breaking all bounds, flying to either pole,
Twining for ever in a circling spell,—
Ah! Joseph all my fierce disgust lies dead:
At sight of thee I e'er return forlorn.
Oh! tyrant Love, thy tyranny is mine!
Bethink thee friend, be merciful in time, [*Aloud.*
Nor ever cruel to thyself and me;—
The past shall fade,—memory expire in hope!
The spark still burns of all this mighty fire,
And love possesses me, that I have lov'd.
The setting sun with fiery galaxy
O'erfloods the fulgent west with dying gaze,
And still I yearn to bathe in such a light.
There is a second childhood in departing love,—
No tenderness so keen as that adieu;
The blood of Joseph ebbeth from my heart!—
My other self, if you will take my hand,
I'll whisper you hereafter.

Joseph. Madam, no!

Phrax. Oh! fool, you tie a stone about your neck,
And cross the yawning gulf upon a reed.
Hark! 'tis the main roars hoarsely underneath.

[*A pause.* PHRAXANOR *kneels to* JOSEPH *in apparent supplication.*

Joseph. Madam, for shame! Rise, I beseech thee, rise!

Kneel to thy husband, and I'll kneel to thee.
[*She springs to her feet.*

Phrax. By all our altars and their leaping flames,
The searching malice of our angry gods,
But I will be reveng'd upon thee, slave!
Could I have wrung from him a tardy 'yes,'
[*Aside.*
The echo of my laughter had been heard
Hence to the desert pyramids and back;
For now I loathe him in my inmost soul,—
The flame rejected by this wall of ice
Returns for ever to consume myself,
Withering in my own remorseful fire,
Baffled, besham'd, humiliated, lost;
But I will be reveng'd!—
This is a bitter silence for thee, slave! [*Aloud.*
My mind is active.

Joseph. Would your heart were so.

Phrax. My heart, that was so red, is black as night;
I muse on the unfathom'd mystery
Of the profound profoundest of the sea,
A dwelling of eternal solitude,
Confine of life, and realm of mute despair,
A spell ne'er broken, save by monsters dire,
Unknown to man's imagination,
Prowling the desert of this liquid world.
For combat or for prey such prison must
Be found out, or invented cunningly,
The measure of my hatred and revenge.
By what fierce means I'll drive thee to thy grave,
Or shroud thy life to come in misery,
I will not speak; so the discovery,
Being unsure, will work more bitterly.

Joseph. Oh! dangerous woman, where will all this end?

Phrax. Woman!—Woman to me!—

[*She loosens a little dagger at her waist.*

Assuredly I shall lay hands on you—
A common insult in a common name!
Sir, I am Phraxanor, of royal blood,
The beautiful, the courted, the ador'd,
Who, for the first and last time in her life,
Hath vail'd her pride before a slave—Ha! Woman!
A word thy blood shall wash away. He comes!—
An empty urn followeth in his train,
Whereon is writ, in crimson characters,
"Joseph the Canaanite, the slave of slaves,
The vilest of this country and his own."
He comes! He comes! My injuries rejoice!
I turn my back on thee as on the dead.

William Barnes.

1801—1886.

THIS poet was born in the north of Dorsetshire, at "Rushay House," a farm not far from Pentridge, in the Vale of Blackmore, about eleven miles from Salisbury. His father, John Barnes, was a tenant-farmer, though for generations the family had owned extensive tracts of land in the neighbourhood. His mother, Grace Scott, was a woman of refined mind, with love for art and poetry; and this she gave to her son, a small, delicate boy, manifestly unfitted for a life of hard hand-toil. The exact date of his birth is unknown, but it is recorded that he was baptized at the parish church of Sturminster Newton, on March 20th, 1801. He learnt his letters at a dame's school, and moved thence to a larger one at Sturminster. Here he was taken, through his hand-writing, into the office of a solicitor; and the clergyman of the town lent him books for his classical studies, while the local organist discovered and developed his taste for music. In 1818 he left Sturminster, and entered the office of a solicitor at Dorchester, where he made friends who joined with him in the studies of his leisure time. Here, too, a clergyman helped him with his classics, giving him evening lessons, and placing his library at the youth's disposal. Soon afterwards he fell in love, at first sight, with Julia Miles, the daughter of an excise officer quartered

in the town; and he began to publish verses in the *Weekly Entertainer* of 1820. He had already learnt the art of wood-engraving, and contributed some eight woodcuts to a collection of "Walks round Dorchester." With the funds derived from this source he published, in 1822, "Orra: a Lapland Tale,"—in the same year being betrothed to his future wife. He began the study of Italian, and had tried the translating of Metastasio and Petrarch.

About this time the mast rship of a school falling vacant at Mere, in Wiltshire, the young poet and lover took the post, moving thither in 1823. Here he began, among other new languages, the study of Persian. From 1826 to 1829 he continued engraving, and was sometimes "paid in bookbinding and cheese." He also now attempted working in metal, and for a short time "had an idle day-dream of trying his future as an engraver at Bath." For four years he lived alone in lodgings; but in 1827 took Chantry House, a building of the time of Charles II., and soon afterwards was married. In 1829 he published an "Etymological Glossary" of English words from foreign derivation; and in 1830 wrote several sonnets in English and Italian, besides contributing papers on varied subjects to the *Dorset County Chronicle*. We find him reading Buffon, Josephus, Burns, Ossian, History of Spain, German and Russian books, Theology, Gray's "Connexion," Rollin's "Ancient History," the "History of France," Sallust, Logic, Hutton's "Mathematics," "Welsh Grammar," Shakespeare, Hebrew, Blackstone's "Commentaries," the "Germany" of Tacitus. He began contributing to the *Gentleman's Magazine*. About this time he used to be occupied by the organ on Sundays at

church; and we find record of a sermon, composed by him, being preached. The stimulus of a dramatic company led him to writing a farce, *The Honest Thief*, which was acted; as also a comedy. After revising his work he sent it to London; but it was not accepted. In 1831 he made an excursion to Abergavenny, fishing and studying Welsh. In 1832-3 we find added to his studies Herodotus, Ovid, Herschel's "Astronomy," and Hindustani.

It was not until 1833 that Barnes began writing poems in the Dorset dialect. These were published in the *County Chronicle*, attracting considerable notice. In the same year he published a "Catechism of Government in General, and of England in Particular," at Shaftesbury. An essay on the "Advantages of the Study of Mathematics" appeared in 1834. Next year he removed, with his school, to Dorchester; changing, with more pupils, after a year, into a larger house. In 1837 he put his name on the books of St. John's College, Cambridge, as a ten-years' man. In 1841 his "Investigations of the Laws of Case in Language" was published by a London firm, and in the same year an "Arithmetical and Commercial Dictionary." In 1842 appeared his "Elements of English Grammar," in which the noun is declined with nine cases.

In 1844 the poems in Dorset dialect, which had appeared, were collected and published in London, with a glossary and dissertation. They had already won warm admirers, and he was introduced by the Hon. Mrs. Norton to a few friends in London. He brought out in the same year two small books on "Perspective" and Practical Science." In 1847 appeared "Poems, partly of Rural Life, in National

English," in which he made several experiments in rhythm; among them adopting the long-disused alliterative measure:

"But when the *m*oonlight *m*arks anew
Thy *m*urky shadow on the dew,
So *sl*owly o'er the *sl*eeping flowers
On *sl*iding through the nightly hours,
While *s*mokeless, on the *h*ouses' *h*eight
The *h*igher chimney gleams in light
Above yon *r*eedy *r*oof, where now
With *r*osy cheeks and lily brow,
No *w*atchful mother's *w*ard within
The *w*indow sleeps for me to win," etc.

In 1847 some "Outlines of Geography and Ethnography" were printed by him at Dorchester; and he was ordained deacon, next year being priested, and becoming curate of Whitcombe. In 1850 he proceeded Bachelor of Divinity at Cambridge, taking the opportunity, while resident there, to make wider studies in Philology. An "Anglo-Saxon Delectus" was published during the time; and in the previous year had appeared his "*Humilis Domus:* Some Thoughts on the Social Condition of the Poor, especially in Wiltshire." Soon afterwards Barnes began lecturing, chiefly upon philological subjects. In 1852 he resigned his curacy; losing his wife six months later. In 1853-4 he contributed several articles to the *Retrospective Review*, then just started; and in 1854 appeared his "Philological Grammar," a truly remarkable book, for the copyright of which he received £5. In it the noun is given twelve cases. We find him this year reading the "Gulistan" of Saadi.

In 1856 it was suggested to him by a friend, whom he had met at the house of Macready at

Sherborne, to give public readings of his poetry, which he did; and two years later brought out a second series of Dorset Poems under the title of "Hwomely Rhymes," the publisher giving him £15 upon four hundred copies. In the same year appeared "Britain, and the Ancient Britons," from his pen; and it is known that he tried the writing of a romance, but after a little while gave it up. His next book, "Views of Labour and Gold," the outcome of some of his lectures, is an essay into the higher morality of social life. About this time, with sons entering the world, he was made anxious as to his own means of livelihood. His school, perhaps not unnaturally, had been diminishing in numbers, and Lord Palmerston sent him, through the Treasury, £30 royal bounty. In 1859, at the suggestion of Prince Lucien Bonaparte, he translated the "Song of Solomon" into Dorset dialect; and in 1860 began writing for *Macmillan's Magazine*. In 1861 he received a Civil List Pension of £70 per annum. In the same year appeared the most remarkable of Barnes's Philological Studies, under the title of "Tiw." In 1862 he was appointed Rector of Came. In 1863, for the Philological Society, he wrote a "Grammar and Glossary of the Dorset Dialect." In 1865 he was actively engaged in the work of the Archæological Institute, and next year published two curious tracts, "A View of Christian Marriage," and "Prinking: a View of Bodily Ornament and Design." In 1868, under persuasion, Barnes translated a few of his poems into ordinary English. They were published under the title of "Poems of Rural Life," and reprinted the same year in America. They were not, however, a success,

artistically or financially. The next few years were taken up with archæological studies and philology. As an outcome appeared, in 1878, "Speechcraft;" and in 1879 an "Outline of Redecraft," or Logic. In the same year was published a collective edition of his poems. Barnes was now in his seventy-ninth year, but he went on working still with the same variety of subject and enormous grasp of power, till the end, October 7th, 1886.

The verses of Barnes, like his studies, bear all the marks of the English character. No English poet, of first rank, has ever been so free from foreign influence in any age. "I do not want," he said, "to be trammelled with the thoughts and style of other poets, and I take none as my model, except the Persian and Italian, on which I have framed some, as regards only metre and rhyme." This is notable. Barnes never gets beyond his Dorsetshire fields. Many, since another English poet as he, Nicholas of Guildford, six hundred years before, wrote, also in Dorsetshire, his "Owl and the Nightingale," have written out of the pure love of their native country, but none have written so singly. Barnes is like one of our forest oaks, so typical of English landscape. His verse, like Langland's, is full of righteousness; like Chaucer's, it is filled with the joy of life.—More rustic than Crabbe, more literary than Clare, there are no eclogues in the English language which can compare, in perfection of touch, with the prototypes of Theocritus and Virgil, save only those which are to be found in the poetry of William Barnes.

CHARLES SAYLE.

POEMS OF RURAL LIFE.

WILLIAM BARNES.

I.—WOODCOM' FEAST.

COME, Fanny, come! put on thy white,
'Tis Woodcom' feäst, good now! to-night.
Come! think noo mwore, you silly maïd,
O' chickèn drown'd, or ducks a-straÿ'd;
Nor mwope to vind thy new frock's taïl
A-tore by hitchèn in a naïl;
Nor grieve an' hang thy head azide,
A-thinkèn o' thy lam' that died.
The flag's a-vleèn wide an' high,
An' ringèn bells do sheäke the sky;
The fifes do plaÿ, the horns do roar,
An' boughs be up at ev'ry door:
They 'll be a-dancèn soon,—the drum
'S a-rumblèn now. Come, Fanny, come!
Why father's gone, an' mother too.
They went up leäne an hour agoo;
An' at the green the young an wold
Do stan' so thick as sheep in vwold:
The men do laugh, the bwoys do shout,—
Come out you mwopèn wench, come out,
An' go wi' me, an' show at leäst
Bright eyes an' smiles at Woodcom' feäst.

Come, let's goo out, an' fling our heels
About in jigs an' vow'r-han' reels;
While äll the stiff-lagg'd wolder vo'k,
A-zittèn roun', do talk an' joke

An' smile to zee their own wold rigs
A-show'd by our wild geämes an' jigs.
Vor ever since the vwold church speer
Vu'st prick'd the clouds, vrom year to year,
When grass in meäd did reach woone's knees,
An' blooth did kern in apple-trees,
Zome merry day 'v' a-broke to sheen
Above the dance at Woodcom' green,
An' all o' they that now do lie
So low all roun' the speer so high,
Woonce, vrom the biggest to the leäst,
Had merry hearts at Woodcom' feäst.

Zoo keep it up, an' gi'e it on
To other vo'k when we be gone.
Come out; vor when the zettèn zun
Do leäve in sheäde our harmless fun,
The moon a-risèn in the east
Do gi'e us light at Woodcom feäst.
Come, Fanny, come! put on thy white,
'Tis merry Woodcom' feäst to-night:
There's nothèn vor to mwope about,—
Come out, you leäzy jeäde, come out!
An' thou wult be, to woone at leäst,
The prettiest maïd at Woodcom' feäst.

II—MAY.

COME out o' door, 'tis Spring! 'tis Maÿ;
The trees be green, the vields be gaÿ;
The weather's warm, the winter blast,
Wi' all his traïn o' clouds, is past;
The zun do rise while vo'k do sleep,
To teäke a higher daily zweep,
Wi' cloudless feäce a-flingèn down
His sparklèn light upon the groun'.

The aïr's a-streamèn soft,—come drow
The windor open; let it blow
In drough the house, where vire, an' door
A-shut, kept out the cwold avore.
Come, let the vew dull embers die,
An' come below the open sky;
An' wear your best, vor fear the groun
In colours gaÿ mid sheäme your gown:
An' goo an' rig wi' me a mile
Or two up over geäte an' stile,
Drough zunny parrocks that do leäd,
Wi' crooked hedges, to the meäd,
Where elems high, in steätely ranks,
Do rise vrom yollow cowslip-banks,
An' birds do twitter vrom the spraÿ
O' bushes deck'd wi' snow-white maÿ;
An' gil'cups, wi' the deäisy bed,
Be under ev'ry step you tread.

We'll wind up roun' the hill, an' look
All down the thickly-timber'd nook,
Out where the squier's house do show
His grey-wall'd peaks up drough the row
O' sheädy elems, where the rook
Do build her nest; an' where the brook
Do creep along the meäds, an' lie
To catch the brightness o' the sky;
An' cows, in water to theïr knees,
Do stan' a-whiskèn off the vlees.

Mother o' blossoms, and ov all
That's feäir a-vield vrom Spring till Fall,
The gookoo over white-weäv'd seas
Do come to zing in thy green trees,
An' buttervlees, in giddy flight,

Do gleäm the mwost by thy gaÿ light.
Oh! when, at last, my fleshly eyes
Shall shut upon the vields an' skies,
Mid zummer's zunny days be gone,
An' winter's clouds be comèn on:
Nor mid I draw upon the e'th,
O' thy sweet aïr my leätest breath;
Alassen I mid want to staÿ
Behine' for thee, O flow'ry May!

III.—WHITSUNTIDE AN' CLUB WALKEN.

YES, last Whit-Monday, I an' Meäry
Got up betimes to mind the deäiry;
An' gi'ed the milkèn païls a scrub,
An' dress'd, an' went to zee the club.
Vor up at public-house, by ten
O'clock the pleäce wer vull o' men,
A-dress'd to goo to church, an' dine,
An' walk about the pleäce in line.
Zoo off they started, two an' two,
Wi' païnted poles an' knots o' blue,
An' girt silk flags,—I wish my box
'D a-got em all in ceäpes an' frocks,—
A-weävèn wide an' flappèn loud
In plaÿsome winds above the crowd;
While fifes did squeak an' drums did rumble,
An' deep beäzzoons did grunt an' grumble,
An all the vo'k in gath'rèn crowds
Kick'd up the doust in smeechy clouds,
That slowly rose an' spread abrode
In streamèn aïr above the road.
An' then at church there wer sich lots
O' hats a-hangèn up wi' knots,

An' poles a-stood so thick as iver,
The rushes stood beside a river.
An' Mr. Goodman gi'ed em warnèn
To spend their evenèn lik' their mornèn;
An' not to praÿ wi' mornèn tongues,
An' then to zwear wi' evenèn lungs;
Nor vu'st sheäke hands, to let the wrist
Lift up at last a bruisèn vist:
Vor clubs were all a-meän'd vor friends,
He twold em, an' vor better ends
Than twitèn vo'k an' pickèn quarrels,
An' tipplèn cups an' emptèn barrels,—
Vor meäkèn woone man do another
In need the kindness ov a brother.

An' after church they went to dine
'Ithin the long-wall'd room behine
The public-house, where you remember,
We had our dance back last December.
An' there they meäde sich stunnèn clatters
Wi' knives an' forks, an' pleätes an' platters;
An' waïters ran, an' beer did pass
Vrom tap to jug, vrom jug to glass:
An' when they took away the dishes,
They drink'd good healths, an' wish'd good wishes,
To all the girt vo'k o' the land,
An' all good things vo'k took in hand;
An' woone cried *hip, hip, hip!* an' hollow'd,
An' tothers all struck in, an' vollow'd;
An' grabb'd their drink wi' eager clutches,
An' swigg'd it wi' sich hearty glutches,
As vo'k, stark mad wi' pweison stuff,
That thought theirzelves not mad enough.

An' after that they went all out
In rank ageän, an' walk'd about,
An' gi'ed zome parish vo'k a call;
An', then went down to Narley Hall
An' had zome beer, an' danc'd between
The elem trees upon the green.
An' down along the road they done
All sorts o' mad-cap things vor fun;
An' danc'd, a-pokèn out their poles,
An' pushèn bwoys down into holes:
An' Sammy Stubbs come out o' rank,
An' kiss'd me up ageän the bank,
A saucy chap; I ha'nt vor'gied en
Not yet,—in short, I han't a-zeed en.
Zoo in the dusk ov evenèn, zome
Went back to drink, an' zome went hwome.

IV.—WEEK'S END IN ZUMMER, IN THE WOLD VO'K'S TIME.

HIS aunt an' uncle,—ah! the kind
Wold souls be often in my mind:
A better couple never stood
In shoes, an' vew be voun' so good.
She cheer'd the work-vo'k in their tweils
Wi' timely bits an' draps, an' smiles;
An' *he* païd all o'm at week's end,
Their money down to goo an' spend.

In zummer, when week's end come roun',
The haÿ-meäkers did come vrom groun',
An' all zit down, wi' weary bwones,
Within the yard a-peäved wi' stwones,
Along avore the peäles, between
The yard a-steän'd an' open green.
There women zot wi' bare-neck'd chaps,

An' maïdens wi' their sleeves an' flaps
To screen vrom het their eärms an' polls,
An' men wi' beards so black as coals:
Girt stocky Jim, an lanky John,
An' poor wold Betty dead an' gone;
An' cleän-grown Tom so spry an' strong,
An' Liz the best to pitch a zong,
That now ha' nearly half a score
O' childern zwarmèn at her door;
An' whindlen Ann, that cried wi' fear
To hear the thunder when 'twer near,—
A zickly maïd, so peäle's the moon,
That voun' her zun goo down at noon;
An' blushèn Jeäne so shy an' meek,
That seldom let us hear her speak,
That wer a-coorted an' undone
By Farmer Woodley's woldest son;
An' after she'd a-been vorzook,
Wer voun' a-drown'd in Longmeäd brook.

An' zoo, when *he*'d a-been all roun',
An' païd em all their wages down,
She us'd to bring vor all, by teäle
A cup o' cider or ov eäle,
An' then a tutty meäde o' lots
O' blossoms vrom her flower-nots,
To wear in bands an' button-holes
At church, an' in their evenèn strolls.
The pea that rangled to the oves,
An' columbines an' pinks an' cloves,
Sweet rwosen vrom the prickly tree,
An' jilliflow'rs, an' jessamy;
An' short-liv'd pinies, that do shed
Their leaves upon a eärly bed.

She didden put in honeyzuck :
She'd nwone, she zaïd, that she could pluck
Avore wild honeyzucks, a-vound
In ev'ry hedge ov ev'ry ground.
Zoo maïd an' woman, bwoy an' man,
Went off, while zunzet aïr did fan
Their merry zunburnt feäzen ; zome
Down leäne, an' zome drough parrocks hwome.

Ah ! who can tell, that ha'nt a-vound,
The sweets o' week's-end comèn round !
When Zadurday do bring woone's mind
Sweet thoughts o' Zunday clwose behind ;
The day that's all our own to spend
Wi' God an' wi' an e'thly friend.
The worold's girt vo'k, wi' the best
O' worldly goods mid be a-blest ;
But Zunday is the poor man's peärt,
To seäve his soul an' cheer his heart.

V.—A ZONG OV HARVEST HWOME.

THE ground is clear. There's nar a ear
O' stannèn corn a-left out now,
Vor win' to blow or raïn to drow ;
'Tis all up seäfe in barn or mow.
Here's health to them that plough'd an' zow'd ;
Here's health to them that reap'd an' mow'd,
An' them that had to pitch an' lwoad,
Or tip the rick at Harvest Hwome.
The happy zight,—the merry night,
The men's delight,—the Harvest Hwome.

An' mid noo harm o' vire or storm
Bevall the farmer or his corn ;

An' ev'ry zack o' zeed gi'e back
A hunderd-vwold so much in barn.
An' mid his Meäker bless his store,
His wife an' all that she've a-bore,
An' keep all evil out o' door,
Vrom Harvest Hwome to Harvest Hwome.
The happy zight,—the merry night,
The men's delight,—the Harvest Hwome.

Mid nothèn ill betide the mill,
As day by day the miller's wheel
Do dreve his clacks, an' heist his zacks,
An' vill his bins wi' show'rèn meal:
Mid's water never overflow
His dousty mill, nor zink too low,
Vrom now till wheat ageän do grow,
An' we've another Harvest Hwome.
The happy zight,—the merry night,
The men's delight,—the Harvest Hwome.

Drough cisterns wet an' malt-kil's het,
Mid barley paÿ the malter's païns;
An' mid noo hurt bevall the wort,
A-bweilèn vrom the brewer's graïns.
Mid all his beer keep out o' harm
Vrom bu'sted hoop or thunder storm,
That we mid have a mug to warm
Our merry hearts nex' Harvest Hwome.
The happy zight,—the merry night,
The men's delight,—the Harvest Hwome.

Mid luck an' jaÿ the beäker pay,
As he do hear his vier roar,
Or nimbly catch his hot white batch,
A-reekèn vrom the oven door.

An' mid it never be too high
Vor our vew zixpences to buy,
When we do hear our children cry
Vor bread, avore nex' Harvest Hwome.
The happy zight,—the merry night,
The men's delight,—the Harvest Hwome.

Wi' jaÿ o' heart mid shooters start
The whirrèn pa'tridges in vlocks;
While shots do vlee drough bush an' tree,
An' dogs do stan' so still as stocks.
An' let em ramble round the farms
Wi' guns 'ithin their bended eärms,
In goolden zunsheen free o' storms,
Rejaïcèn vor the Harvest Hwome.
The happy zight,—the merry night,
The men's delight,—the Harvest Hwome.

VI.—TWO FARMS IN WOONE.

Eclogue.

Robert an' Thomas.

ROBERT.

YOU'LL lose your meäster soon, then, I do vind;
He's gwaïn to leäve his farm, as I do larn,
At Miĕlmas; an' I be zorry vor'n.
What, is he then a little bit behind?

THOMAS.

O no! at Miĕlmas his time is up,
An' thik there sly wold fellow, Farmer Tup,
A-fearèn that he'd get a bit o' bread,
'V a-been an' took his farm here over 's head.

ROBERT.

How come the Squire to treat your meäster zoo?

THOMAS.

Why, he an' meäster had a word or two.

ROBERT.

Is Farmer Tup a-gwaïn to leäve his farm ?
He han't a-got noo young woones vor to zwarm.
Poor over-reachèn man ! why to be sure
He don't want all the farms in parish, do er ?

THOMAS.

Why ees, all ever he can come across,
Last year, you know, he got away the eäcre
Or two o' ground a-rented by the beäker,
An' what the butcher had to keep his hoss ;
An' vo'k do beänhan' now, that meäster's lot
Will be a-drowd along wi' what he got.

ROBERT.

That's it. In theäse here pleäce there used to be
Eight farms avore they wer a-drowd together,
An' eight farm-housen. Now how many be there ?
Why after this, you know there'll be but dree.

THOMAS.

An' now they don't imploy so many men
Upon the land as work'd upon it then,
Vor all they midden crop it worse, nor stock it.
The lan'lord, to be sure, is into pocket ;
Vor half the housen beën down, 'tis clear,
Don't cost so much to keep em up, a-near.
But then the jobs o' work in wood an' morter
Do come I 'spose, you know, a little shorter ;
An' many that wer little farmers then,
Be now a-come all down to leäb'rèn men ;

An' many leäb'rèn men, wi' empty hands,
Do live lik' drones upon the worker's lands.

ROBERT.

Aye, if a young chap, woonce, had any wit
To try an' scrape together zome vew pound,
To buy some cows an' teäke a bit o' ground,
He mid become a farmer, bit by bit.
But, hang it! now the farms be all so big,
An' bits o' groun' so skeä'ce, woone got no scope;
If woone could seäve a poun', woone couldden hope
To keep noo live stock but a little pig.

THOMAS.

Why here wer vourteen men, zome years agoo,
A-kept a-drashèn half the winter drough;
An' now, woone's drashels be'n't a bit o' good.
They got machines to drashy wi', plague teäke em!
An' he that vu'st vound out the way to meäke em,
I'd drash his busy zides vor'n if I could!
Avore they took away our work, they ought
To meäke us up the bread our leäbour bought.

ROBERT.

They hadden need meäke poor men's leäbour less,
Vor work a'ready is uncommon ṣkeä'ce.

THOMAS.

Ah! Robert! times be badish vor the poor;
An' worse will come, I be a-fear'd, if Moore
In theäse year's almanick do tell us right.

ROBERT.

Why then we sartainly must starve. Good night!

VII.—BLACKMWORE MAIDENS.

THE primrwose in the sheäde do blow,
The cowslip in the zun,
The thyme upon the down do grow,
The clote where streams do run;
An' where do pretty maïdens grow
An' blow, but where the tow'r
Do rise among the bricken tuns,
In Blackmwore by the Stour.

If you could zee their comely gait,
An' prettÿ feäces' smiles,
A-trippèn on so light o' waight,
An' steppèn off the stiles;
A-gwaïn to church, as bells do swing
An' ring 'ithin the tow'r,
You'd own the pretty maïdens' pleäce
Is Blackmwore by the Stour.

If you vrom Wimborne took your road,
To Stower or Paladore,
An' all the farmers' housen show'd
Their daughters at the door;
You'd cry to bachelors at hwome—
"Here, come: 'ithin an hour
You'll vind ten maïdens to your mind,
In Blackmwore by the Stour."

An' if you look'd 'ithin their door,
To zee em in their pleäce,
A-doèn housework up avore
Their smilèn mother's feäce;
You'd cry—"Why, if a man would wive
An' thrive, 'ithout a dow'r,
Then let en look en out a wife
In Blackmwore by the Stour."

As I upon my road did pass
A school-house back in Maÿ,
There out upon the beäten grass
Wer maïdens at their plaÿ;
An' as the pretty souls did tweil
An' smile, I cried, "The flow'r
O' beauty, then, is still in bud
In Blackmwore by the Stour."

VIII.—THE YEAR-CLOCK.

WE zot bezide the leäfy wall,
Upon the bench at evenfall,
While aunt led off our minds vrom ceäre
Wi' veäiry teäles, I can't tell where:
An' vound us woone among her stock
O' feäbles, o' the girt Year-clock.
His feäce wer bluc's the zummer skies,
An' wide's the zight o' lookèn eyes,
For hands, a zun wi' glowèn feäce,
An' peäler moon wi' swifter peäce,
Did wheel by stars o' twinklèn light,
By bright-wall'd day, and dark-treed night;
An' down upon the high- ky'd land,
A-reachèn wide, on either hand,
Wer hill an' dell wi' win'-swaÿ'd trees,
An' lights a-zweepèn over seas,
An' gleamèn cliffs, an' bright-wall'd tow'rs,
Wi' sheädes a-markèn on the hours;
An' as the feäce, a-rollèn round,
Brought comely sheäpes along the ground,
The Spring did come in winsome steäte
Below a glowèn raïnbow geäte;

An' fan wi' aïr a-blowèn weak,
Her glossy heäir, an' rwosy cheäk,
As she did shed vrom oben hand,
The leäpèn zeed on vurrow'd land;
The while the rook, wi' heästy flight,
A-floatèn in the glowèn light,
Did bear avore her glossy breast
A stick to build her lofty nest,
An' strong-limb'd Tweil, wi' steady hands,
Did guide along the vallow lands
The heavy zull, wi' bright-sheär'd beam,
Avore the weäry oxen team.
Wi' Spring a-gone there come behind
Sweet Zummer, jaÿ ov ev'ry mind,
Wi' feäce a-beamèn to beguile
Our weäry souls ov ev'ry tweil.
While birds did warble in the dell
In softest aïr o' sweetest smell;
An' she, so winsome-feäir did vwold
Her comely limbs in green an' goold,
An' wear a rwosy wreath, wi' studs
O' berries green, an' new-born buds,
A-fring'd in colours vier-bright,
Wi' sheäpes o' buttervlees in flight.
When Zummer went, the next ov all
Did come the sheäpe o' brown-feäc'd Fall,
A-smilèn in a comely gown
O' green, a-shot wi' yellow-brown,
A-border'd wi' a goolden stripe
O' fringe, a-meäde o' corn-ears ripe,
An' up ageän her comely zide
Upon her rounded eärm, did ride
A perty basket, all a-twin'd
O' slender stems wi' leaves an' rind,

A-vill'd wi' fruit the trees did shed,
All ripe, in purple, goold, an' red;
An' busy Leäbor there did come
A-zingèn zongs ov harvest hwome,
An' red-ear'd dogs did briskly run
Roun' cheervul Leisure wi' his gun,
Or stan' an' mark, wi' stedvast zight,
The speckled pa'tridge rise in flight.
An' next ageän to mild-feäc'd Fall
Did come peäle Winter, last ov all,
A-bendèn down, in thoughtvul mood,
Her head 'ithin a snow-white hood
A-deck'd wi' icy-jewels, bright
An' cwold as twinklèn stars o' night;
An' there wer weary Leäbor, slack
O' veet to keep her vrozen track,
A-lookèn off, wi' wistful eyes
To reefs o' smoke, that there did rise
A-meltèn to the peäle-feäc'd zun,
Above the houses' lofty tun.
An' there the girt Year-clock did goo
By day an' night, vor ever true,
Wi' mighty wheels a-rollèn round
'Ithout a beät, 'ithout a sound.

IX.—THE LEANE.

THEY do zay that a travellèn chap
Have a-put in the newspeäper now,
That the bit o' green ground on the knap
Should be all a-took in vor the plough.
He do fancy 'tis easy to show
That we can be but stunpolls at best,
Vor to leäve a green spot where a flower can grow,
Or a voot-weary walker mid rest.
'Tis hedge-grubbèn, Thomas, an' ledge-grubbèn,
Never a-done
While a sov'rèn mwore's to be won.

The road, he do zay, is so wide
As 'tis wanted vor travellers' wheels,
As if all that did travel did ride,
An' did never get galls on their heels.
He would leäve sich a thin strip o' groun',
That, if a man's veet in his shoes
Wer a-burnèn an' zore, why he coulden zit down
But the wheels would run over his toees.
Vor 'tis meäke money, Thomas, an' teäke money,
What's zwold an' bought
Is all that is worthy o' thought.

Years agoo the leäne-zides did bear grass,
Vor to pull wi' the geeses' red bills,
That did hiss at the vo'k that did pass,
Or the bwoys that pick'd up their white quills.
But shortly, if vower or vive
Ov our goslèns do creep vrom the agg,
They must mwope in the geärden, mwore dead than alive,

In a coop, or a-tied by the lag.
Vor to catch at land, Thomas, an' snatch at land,
Now is the plan;
Meäke money wherever you can.

The childern wull soon have noo pleäce
Vor to play in, an' if they do grow,
They wull have a thin musheroom feäce,
Wi' their bodies so sumple as dough.
But a man is a-meäde ov a child,
An' his limbs do grow worksome by plaÿ;
An' if the young child's little body's a-spweil'd,
Why, the man's wull the sooner decaÿ.
But wealth is wo'th now mwore than health is wo'th;
Let it all goo,
If't 'ull bring but a sov'rèn or two.

Vor to breed the young fox or the heäre,
We can gi'e up whole eäcres o' ground,
But the greens be a-grudg'd, vor to rear
Our young children up healthy an' sound,
Why, there woont be a-left the next age
A green spot where their veet can goo free;
An' the goocoo wull soon be committed to cage
Vor a trespass in zomebody's tree.
Vor 'tis lockèn up, Thomas, an' blockèn up,
Stranger or brother,
Men mussen come nigh woone another.

Woone day I went in at a geäte,
Wi' my child, where an echo did sound,
An' the owner come up, an' did reäte
Me as if I would car off his ground.
But his vield an' the grass wer-a-let,
An' the damage that he could a-took,
Wer at mwost that the while I did open the geäte

I did rub roun' the eye on the hook.
But 'tis drevèn out, Thomas, an' hevèn out.
Trample noo grounds,
Unless you be after the hounds.

Ah! the Squiër o' Culver-dell Hall
Wer as diff'rent as light is vrom dark,
Wi' zome vo'k that, as evenèn did vall,
Had a-broke drough long grass in his park,
Vor he went, wi' a smile, vor to meet
Wi' the trespassers while they did pass,
An' he zaid, "I do fear you'll catch cwold in your veet,
You've a-walk'd drough so much o' my grass."
His mild words, Thomas, cut em like swords, Thomas,
Newly a-whet,
An' went vurder wi' them than a dreat.

X.—THE HEARE.

(*Dree o'm a-ta'kèn o't.*)

(1) THERE be the greyhounds! lo'k! an' there's the heäre!
(2) What houn's, the squier's, Thomas? where, then, where?
(1) Why, out in Ash Hill, near the barn, behind Thik tree. (3) The pollard? (1) Pollard! no b'ye blind?
(2) There, I do zee em over-right thik cow.
(3) The red woone? (1) No, a mile beyand her now.
(3) Oh! there's the heäre, a-meäkèn for the drong.
(2) My goodness! How the dogs do zweep along,
A-pokèn out their pweinted noses' tips.
(3) He can't allow hizzelf much time vor slips!

(1) They'll hab'en, after all, I'll bet a crown.
(2) Done vor a crown. They woon't! He's gwäin to groun'.
(3) He is! (1) He idden! (3) Ah! 'tis well his tooes
Ha' got noo corns, inside o' hobnaïl shoes.
(1) He's geäme a-runnèn too. Why, he do mwore
Than eärn his life. (3) His life wer his avore.
(1) There, now the dogs wull turn en. (2) No! He's right.
(1) He idden! (2) Ees he is! (3) He's out o' zight.
(1) Aye, aye. His mettle wull be well a-tried
Agwaïn down Verny Hill, o' tother zide.
They'll have en there. (3) O no! a vew good hops
Wull teäke en on to Knapton Lower Copse.
(2) An' that's a meesh that he've a-took avore.
(3) Ees, that's his hwome. (1) He'll never reach his door.
(2) He wull. (1) He woon't. (3) Now, hark, d'ye heär em now?
(2) O! here's a bwoy a-come athirt the brow
O' Knapton Hill. We'll ax en. (1) Here, my bwoy!
Can'st tell us where's the heäre? (4) He's got awoy.
(2) Ees, got awoy, in coo'se, I never zeed
A heäre a-scotèn on wi' half his speed.
(1) Why, there, the dogs be wold, an' half a-done.
They can't catch anything wi' lags to run.
(2) Vrom vu'st to last they had but little chance
O' catchèn o'n. (3) They had a perty dance.
(1) No, catch en, no! I little thought they would;
He know'd his road too well to Knapton Wood.
(3) No! no! I wish the squier would let me feäre
On rabbits till his hounds do catch thik heäre.

XI.—THE WIFE A-LOST.

SINCE I noo mwore do zee your feäce,
Up steairs or down below,
I'll zit me in the lwonesome pleäce,
Where flat-bough'd beech do grow:
Below the beeches' bough, my love,
Where you did never come,
An' I don't look to meet ye now,
As I do look at hwome.

Since you noo mwore be at my zide,
In walks in zummer het,
I'll goo alwone where mist do ride,
Drough trees a-drippèn wet:
Below the rain-wet bough, my love,
Where you did never come,
An' I don't grieve to miss ye now,
As I do grieve at hwome.

Since now bezide my dinner-bwoard
Your vaïce do never sound,
I'll eat the bit I can avword,
A-vield upon the ground;
Below the darksome bough, my love,
Where you did never dine,
An' I don't grieve to miss ye now,
As I at hwome do pine.

Since I do miss your vaïce an' feäce
  In praÿer at eventide,
I'll praÿ wi' woone said vaïce vor greäce
  To goo where you do bide;
Above the tree an' bough, my love,
  Where you be gone avore,
An' be a-waïtèn vor me now,
  To come for evermwore.

XII.—TOKENS.

GREEN mwold on zummer bars do show
  That they've a-dripp'd in Winter wet;
The hoof-worn ring o' groun' below
  The tree, do tell o' storms or het;
The trees in rank along a ledge
Do show where woonce did bloom a hedge;
An' where the vurrow-marks do stripe
The down, the wheat woonce rustled ripe.
Each mark ov things a-gone vrom view—
To eyezight's woone, to soulzight two.

The grass ageän the mwoldrèn door
  'S a tóken sad o' vo'k a-gone,
An' where the house, bwoth wall an' vloor,
  'S a-lost, the well mid linger on.
What tokens, then, could Meäry gi'e
Thät she'd a-liv'd, an' liv'd vor me,
But things a-done vor thought an' view?
Good things that nwone ageän can do,
An' every work her love ha' wrought,
To eyezight's woone, but two to thought.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed.

1802—1839.

The author of that useful little book, "Memorable London Houses," although he has not forgotten the residences of Hook and Hood, has made no mention of Praed's birthplace. Praed was born on the 26th July, 1802, at 35, John Street, Bedford Row. His father was a Serjeant-at-law, and sometime chairman of the Audit Board, having a country residence at Teignmouth, in Devon. Of Praed's christian names, Winthrop came from America, to which country his mother's family had emigrated; Mackworth from his father, whose surname it had been. His father seems to have held to him much the same relations as those held by the elder Pope to the author of the "Rape of the Lock," carefully revising his earlier verses, and insisting on precise expression and metrical accuracy. His mother he lost in childhood; and after spending four years at a school near Colnbrook, he passed to Eton in March 1814. Studious and retiring rather than athletic and robust, he made rapid progress. Luckily for himself, he found a worthy successor to his father in one of the masters, the Rev. J. F. Plumptre, who carried on his training in the composition of English verse; and a manuscript magazine, speedily succeeded by the more brilliant and more ambitious *Etonian*, afforded him a field for some-

thing beyond poetical exercises. The *Etonian*, as all know who have met with a volume, was one of the most brilliant of school periodicals. From October 1814 to July 1821, when Praed left Eton, he continued to contribute to it, acquiring a reputation, both in prose and verse, as a writer of marked facility, and a wit of the liveliest order. At Trinity College, Cambridge, where he went in October 1821, this reputation was maintained; and his scholarship, already remarkable, ripened rapidly. Of his Greek and Latin verses in particular, it has been said that they were not so much verse in Greek and Latin as Greek and Latin poetry. He took medal after medal for metrical exercises, and in 1830 capped his University honours by winning the Seatonian prize. Much of his attention during this period was given to the study of public speaking, and the purely literary tastes exhibited at Eton found further opportunity in the *Quarterly Magazine* of Charles Knight, which had among its other distinguished contributors, Macaulay, De Quincey, Moultrie, W. S. Walker, and H. N. Coleridge. The presiding influence of Praed, however, is almost as marked in the *Quarterly Magazine* as it had been in the *Etonian*. In 1825, Praed became tutor to the Marquis of Ailesbury's son, with the collateral intentions of preparing for a Trinity fellowship and reading for the Bar, to which he was called in 1829. His remaining career may be briefly summarised. In November 1830, he entered Parliament for St. Germains. In 1834 he was returned for Great Yarmouth, and in the same year Peel gave him the office of Secretary to the Board of Control. In 1837 he retired from Great Yarmouth, and

became member for Aylesbury, which borough he continued to represent until the time of his death. His political life was one more of promise than performance; but before its premature close in July 1839, he had risen gradually in public estimation, not only for his skill in debate but for other statesmanlike qualities. He was buried at Kensal Green, where there is a long Latin epitaph to his memory. Perhaps the most interesting record of him is a passage of the late Lord Lytton's poem of "St. Stephen's:"—

> "More richly gifted, though to him denied
> E'en thine imperfect honours, Winthrop died;
> Died—scarce a promise of his youth redeem'd,
> And never youth more bright in promise seem'd.
> Granta beheld him with such loving eyes
> Lift the light lance that struck at every prize.
> What the last news?—the medal Praed has won;
> What the last joke?—Praed's epigram or pun;
> And every week that club-room, famous then,
> Where striplings settled questions spoilt by men,
> When grand Macaulay sate triumphant down,
> Heard Praed's reply, and long'd to halve the crown."

Praed belongs generically to that school of poets whose work is rather playful than serious, rather mildly satiric than didactic, rather lyric than narrative. It is a school which includes a good many adverse names, and numbers in its ranks many writers whose relationship to each other is not always superficially apparent. It is, moreover, as indefinitely extended by some critics as it is jealously restricted by others. But it has generally been the custom to regard Praed as the foremost exponent of what, for want of an exacter term, is known as "society verse,"—by society verse being intended, not so

much the verse that treats of man as a social animal as the verse that treats of man (and woman) as they appear in the fashionable world. Many of Praed's pieces do undoubtedly come in this category, and they are numerous enough to justify his claim to be the Coryphæus of his kind. But it is unjust to class him solely as the laureate of county balls and archery meetings. There is a marked difference between the witty but somewhat machine-made antithesis of such stanzas as:—

"I broached whate'er had gone its rounds,
The week before, of scandal;
What made Sir Luke lay down his hounds,
And Jane take up her Handel;
Why Julia walked upon the heath,
With the pale moon above her;
Where Flora lost her false front teeth,
And Ann her falser lover;
How Lord de B. and Mrs. L.
Had crossed the sea together:
My shuddering partner cried, '*O Ciel!*
How *could* they,—in such weather;'"

and the exquisitely finished art of the following quotation from "The Vicar:"—

"He was a shrewd and sound Divine,
Of loud Dissent the mortal terror;
And when, by dint of page and line,
He 'stablished Truth, or startled Error,
The Baptist found him far too deep;
The Deist sighed with saving sorrow;
And the lean Levite went to sleep
And dreamed of tasting pork to-morrow.

His sermons never said or showed
That Earth is foul, that Heaven is gracious,
Without refreshment on the road
From Jerome, or from Athanasius:

And sure a righteous zeal inspired
The hand and head that penned and planned them,
For all who understood admired,
And some who did not understand them."

It is probably by his efforts in this latter vein that he will be best remembered, and they are rather humorous character-painting of a very delicate and individual kind than absolute *vers de société*. But it must at the same time be admitted that Praed's purely social verse reaches the highest level by its skill and fluency. Something of its first charm it has undoubtedly lost with the passing of the society which it celebrates,—a doom which "society verse," strictly so called, bears in it from its birth; but it is so bright, so elegant, and so incisive that it well-nigh overcomes its perishable quality.

Highly popular, in a limited sense, during his life, it was not until some time after his death that Praed's poems attained their present reputation, and even then it was in America that he first became widely known. Two or three collections, all more or less incomplete, had appeared in that country, before the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, on behalf of the poet's representatives, brought out, in 1864, the two volumes which are now regarded as the authorised version of his poetical works. They contain the whole of his acknowledged pieces; but they suggest the possibility that his fame as a verse-writer would have been better served by a selection. His command of his instrument was so great, and his epigrammatic faculty so perfected by use, that the slightest provocation was sufficient to enable him to throw off a creditable "copy of verses." Thus it now and then fell out that the

lines were finished before he had found time to think whether the motive was adequate, or whether they included that beginning, middle, and end which even the trifles of metre require for their preservation. Also it occurred to him at times to write variations on himself, which, in his own interest, it had been wiser to withhold. But these are the objections of those who admire him so much that they would never have him below his best. When he is at his best—and we take that best to be exemplified by "The Red Fisherman, "The Vicar," "Quince," "My Own Araminta," "Our Ball," "Good Night to the Season," and some twenty more pieces, political and otherwise—he is unsurpassed and unsurpassable. In ease of wit and humour, in spontaneity and unflagging vivacity of rhythm, in sparkle of banter and felicity of rhyme, no imitator, whom we can recall, has ever come within measurable distance of Winthrop Mackworth Praed.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

THE RED FISHERMAN.

1827.

WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED.

THE Abbot arose, and closed his book,
And donned his sandal shoon,
And wandered forth, alone, to look
Upon the summer moon:
A starlight sky was o'er his head,
A quiet breeze around;
And the flowers a thrilling fragrance shed
And the waves a soothing sound:
It was not an hour, nor a scene, for aught
But love and calm delight;
Yet the holy man had a cloud of thought
On his wrinkled brow that night.
He gazed on the river that gurgled by,
But he thought not of the reeds;
He clasped his gilded rosary,
But he did not tell the beads;
If he looked to the heaven, 'twas not to invoke
The Spirit that dwelleth there;
If he opened his lips, the words they spoke
Had never the tone of prayer.
A pious priest might the Abbot seem,
He had swayed the crozier well;
But what was the theme of the Abbot's dream,
The Abbot was loth to tell.
Companionless, for a mile or more,
He traced the windings of the shore.
Oh, beauteous is that river still,
As it winds by many a sloping hill,

And many a dim o'er arching grove,
And many a flat and sunny cove,
And terraced lawns, whose bright arcades
The honeysuckle sweetly shades,
And rocks, whose very crags seem bowers,
So gay they are with grass and flowers!
But the Abbot was thinking of scenery
  About as much, in sooth,
As a lover thinks of constancy,
  Or an advocate of truth.
He did not mark how the skies in wrath
  Grew dark above his head;
He did not mark how the mossy path
  Grew damp beneath his tread;
And nearer he came, and still more near,
  To a pool, in whose recess
The water had slept for many a year,
  Unchanged and motionless;
From the river stream it spread away
  The space of half a rood;
The surface had the hue of clay
  And the scent of human blood;
The trees and the herbs that round it grew
  Were venomous and foul,
And the birds that through the bushes flew
  Were the vulture and the owl;
The water was as dark and rank
  As ever a Company pumped;
And the perch, that was netted and laid on the bank,
  Grew rotten while it jumped;
And bold was he who thither came
  At midnight, man or boy,
For the place was cursed with an evil name,
  And that name was "The Devil's Decoy!"

The Abbot was weary as abbot could be,
And he sat down to rest on the stump of a tree:
When suddenly rose a dismal tone,—
Was it a song, or was it a moan?—
"O oh! O ho!
Above,—below,—
Lightly and brightly they glide and go!
The hungry and keen on the top are leaping,
The lazy and fat in the depths are sleeping;
Fishing is fine when the pool is muddy,
Broiling is rich when the coals are ruddy!"—
In a monstrous fright, by the murky light,
He looked to the left and he looked to the right,
And what was the vision close before him,
That flung such a sudden stupor o'er him?
'Twas a sight to make the hair uprise,
And the life-blood colder run:
The startled Priest struck both his thighs,
And the abbey clock struck one!

All alone, by the side of the pool,
A tall man sat on a three-legged stool,
Kicking his heels on the dewy sod,
And putting in order his reel and rod;
Red were the rags his shoulders wore,
And a high red cap on his head he bore;
His arms and his legs were long and bare;
And two or three locks of long red hair
Were tossing about his scraggy neck,
Like a tattered flag o'er a splitting wreck.
It might be time, or it might be trouble,
Had bent that stout back nearly double,
Sunk in their deep and hollow sockets
That blazing couple of Congreve rockets,

And shrunk and shrivelled that tawny skin,
Till it hardly covered the bones within.
The line the Abbot saw him throw
Had been fashioned and formed long ages ago,
And the hands that worked his foreign vest
Long ages ago had gone to their rest:
You would have sworn, as you looked on them,
He had fished in the flood with Ham and Shem!

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
Minnow or gentle, worm or fly,—
It seemed not such to the Abbot's eye;
Gaily it glittered with jewel and gem,
And its shape was the shape of a diadem.
It was fastened a gleaming hook about
By a chain within and a chain without;
The Fisherman gave it a kick and a spin,
And the water fizzed as it tumbled in!

From the bowels of the earth,
Strange and varied sounds had birth;
Now the battle's bursting peal,
Neigh of steed, and clang of steel;
Now an old man's hollow groan
Echoed from the dungeon stone;
Now the weak and wailing cry
Of a stripling's agony!—

Cold by this was the midnight air;
But the Abbot's blood ran colder,
When he saw a gasping Knight lie there,
With a gash beneath his clotted hair,
And a hump upon his shoulder.

And the loyal churchman strove in vain
To mutter a Pater Noster;
For he who writhed in mortal pain
Was camped that night on Bosworth plain—
The cruel Duke of Glo'ster!

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
It was a haunch of princely size,
Filling with fragrance earth and skies.
The corpulent Abbot knew full well
The swelling form, and the steaming smell;
Never a monk that wore a hood
Could better have guessed the very wood
Where the noble hart had stood at bay,
Weary and wounded, at close of day.

Sounded then the noisy glee
Of a revelling company,—
Sprightly story, wicked jest,
Rated servant, greeted guest,
Flow of wine, and flight of cork,
Stroke of knife, and thrust of fork:
But, where'er the board was spread,
Grace, I ween, was never said!—

Pulling and tugging the Fisherman sat;
And the Priest was ready to vomit,
When he hauled out a gentleman, fine and fat,
With a belly as big as a brimming vat,
And a nose as red as a comet.
"A capital stew," the Fisherman said,
"With cinnamon and sherry!"
And the Abbot turned away his head,
For his brother was lying before him dead,
The Mayor of St. Edmond's Bury!

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
It was a bundle of beautiful things,—
A peacock's tail, and a butterfly's wings,
A scarlet slipper, an auburn curl,
A mantle of silk, and a bracelet of pearl,
And a packet of letters, from whose sweet fold
Such a stream of delicate odours rolled,
That the Abbot fell on his face, and fainted,
And deemed his spirit was half-way sainted.

Sounds seemed drooping from the skies,
Stifled whispers, smothered sighs,
And the breath of vernal gales,
And the voice of nightingales:
But the nightingales were mute,
Envious, when an unseen lute
Shaped the music of its chords
Into passion's thrilling words:

"Smile, Lady, smile!—I will not set
Upon my brow the coronet,
Till thou wilt gather roses white
To wear around its gems of light.
Smile, Lady, smile!—I will not see
Rivers and Hastings bend the knee,
Till those bewitching lips of thine
Will bid me rise in bliss from mine.
Smile, Lady, smile!—for who would win
A loveless throne through guilt and sin?
Or who would reign o'er vale and hill,
If woman's heart were rebel still?"

One jerk, and there a lady lay,
A lady wondrous fair;
But the rose of her lip had faded away,
And her cheek was as white and as cold as clay,
And torn was her raven hair.
"Ah ha!" said the Fisher, in merry guise,
"Her gallant was hooked before;"
And the Abbot heaved some piteous sighs,
For oft he had blessed those deep blue eyes,
The eyes of Mistress Shore!

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
Many the cunning sportsman tried,
Many he flung with a frown aside;
A minstrel's harp, and a miser's chest,
A hermit's cowl, and a baron's crest,
Jewels of lustre, robes of price,
Tomes of heresy, loaded dice,
And golden cups of the brightest wine
That ever was pressed from the Burgundy vine.

There was a perfume of sulphur and nitre,
As he came at last to a bishop's mitre!
From top to toe the Abbot shook,
As the Fisherman armed his golden hook
And awfully were his features wrought
By some dark dream or wakened thought.
Look how the fearful felon gazes
On the scaffold his country's vengeance raises,
When the lips are cracked and the jaws are dry
With the thirst which only in death shall die:
Mark the mariner's frenzied frown
As the swaling wherry settles down,

When peril has numbed the sense and will,
Though the hand and the foot may struggle still:
Wilder far was the Abbot's glance,
Deeper far was the Abbot's trance:
Fixed as a monument, still as air,
He bent no knee, and he breathed no prayer,
But he signed—he knew not why or how,—
The sign of the Cross on his clammy brow.

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
As he stalked away with his iron box.
"O ho! O ho!
The cock doth crow;
It is time for the Fisher to rise and go.
Fair luck to the Abbot, fair luck to the shrine!
He hath gnawed in twain my choicest line;
Let him swim to the north, let him swim to the south
The Abbot will carry my hook in his mouth!"

The Abbot had preached for many years
With as clear articulation
As ever was heard in the House of Peers
Against Emancipation;
His words had made battalions quake,
Had roused the zeal of martyrs;
Had kept the Court an hour awake,
And the King himself three quarters:
But even from that hour, 'tis said,
He stammered and he stuttered,
As if an axe went through his head
With every word he uttered.
He stuttered o'er blessing, he stuttered o'er ban,
He stuttered, drunk or dry,
And none but he and the Fisherman
Could tell the reason why!

EVERY-DAY CHARACTERS.

1829.

WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED.

I.

THE VICAR.

SOME years ago, ere time and taste
Had turned our parish topsy-turvy,
When Darnal Park was Darnal Waste,
And roads as little known as scurvy,
The man who lost his way, between
St. Mary's Hill and Sandy Thicket,
Was always shown across the green,
And guided to the Parson's wicket.

Back flew the bolt of lissom lath;
Fair Margaret, in her tidy kirtle,
Led the lorn traveller up the path,
Through clean-clipt rows of box and myrtle;
And Don and Sancho, Tramp and Tray,
Upon the parlour steps collected,
Wagged all their tails, and seemed to say—
Our master knows you—you're expected.

Uprose the Rev. Dr. Brown,
Uprose the Doctor's winsome marrow;
The lady laid her knitting down,
Her husband clasped his ponderous Barrow;
Whate'er the stranger's caste or creed,
Pundit or Papist, saint or sinner,
He found a stable for his steed,
And welcome for himself, and dinner.

If, when he reached his journey's end,
And warmed himself in Court or College,
He had not gained an honest friend
And twenty curious scraps of knowledge,—
If he departed as he came,
With no new light on love or liquor,—
Good sooth, the traveller was to blame,
And not the Vicarage, nor the Vicar.

His talk was like a spring, which runs
With rapid change from rocks to roses:
It slipped from politics to puns,
It passed from Mahomet to Moses;
Beginning with the laws which keep
The planets in their radiant courses,
And ending with some precept deep
For dressing eels, or shoeing horses.

He was a shrewd and sound Divine,
Of loud Dissent the mortal terror;
And when, by dint of page and line,
He 'stablished Truth, or startled Error,
The Baptist found him far too deep;
The Deist sighed with saving sorrow;
And the lean Levite went to sleep,
And dreamed of tasting pork to-morrow.

His sermon never said or showed
That Earth is foul, that Heaven is gracious,
Without refreshment on the road
From Jerome, or from Athanasius:
And sure a righteous zeal inspired
The hand and head that penned and planned them,
For all who understood admired,
And some who did not understand them.

He wrote, too, in a quiet way,
Small treatises, and smaller verses,
And sage remarks on chalk and clay,
And hints to noble Lords—and nurses;
True histories of last year's ghost,
Lines to a ringlet, or a turban,
And trifles for the *Morning Post*,
And nothings for Sylvanus Urban.

He did not think all mischief fair,
Although he had a knack of joking;
He did not make himself a bear,
Although he had a taste for smoking;
And when religious sects ran mad,
He held, in spite of all his learning,
That if a man's belief is bad,
It will not be improved by burning.

And he was kind, and loved to sit
In the low hut or garnished cottage,
And praise the farmer's homely wit,
And share the widow's homelier pottage:
At his approach complaint grew mild;
And when his hand unbarred the shutter,
The clammy lips of fever smiled
The welcome which they could not utter.

He always had a tale for me
Of Julius Cæsar, or of Venus;
From him I learnt the rule of three,
Cat's-cradle, leap-frog, and *Quæ genus:*
I used to singe his powdered wig,
To steal the staff he put such trust in,
And make the puppy dance a jig,
When he began to quote Augustine.

Alack the change! in vain I look
For haunts in which my boyhood trifled,—
The level lawn, the trickling brook,
The trees I climbed, the beds I rifled:
The church is larger than before;
You reach it by a carriage entry;
It holds three hundred people more,
And pews are fitted up for gentry.

Sit in the Vicar's seat: you'll hear
The doctrine of a gentle Johnian,
Whose hand is white, whose tone is clear,
Whose phrase is very Ciceronian.
Where is the old man laid?—look down,
And construe on the slab before you,
"*Hic jacet* GVLIELMVS BROWN,
Vir nullâ non donandus lauru."

II.

QUINCE.

NEAR a small village in the West
Where many very worthy people
Eat, drink, play whist, and do their best
To guard from evil Church and steeple,
There stood—alas! it stands no more!—
A tenement of brick and plaster,
Of which, for forty years and four,
My good friend Quince was lord and master.

Welcome was he in hut and hall
To maids and matrons, peers and peasants;
He won the sympathies of all
By making puns, and making presents.
Though all the parish were at strife,
He kept his counsel, and his carriage,
And laughed, and loved a quiet life,
And shrunk from Chancery suits—and marriage

Sound was his claret—and his head;
Warm was his double ale—and feelings:
His partners at the whist club said
That he was faultless in his dealings:
He went to church but once a week;
Yet Dr. Poundtext always found him
An upright man, who studied Greek,
And liked to see his friends around him.

Asylums, hospitals and schools,
He used to swear, were made to cozen;
All who subscribed to them were fools,—
And he subscribed to half-a-dozen:
It was his doctrine, that the poor
Were always able, never willing;
And so the beggar at the door
Had first abuse, and then—a shilling.

Some public principles he had,
But was no flatterer, nor fretter;
He rapped his box when things were bad,
And said, "I cannot make them better!"
And much he loathed the patriot's snort,
And much he scorned the placeman's snuffle;
And cut the fiercest quarrels short
With—"Patience, gentlemen—and shuffle!"

For full ten years his pointer Speed
  Had couched beneath his master's table;
For twice ten years his old white steed
  Had fattened in his master's stable;
Old Quince averred, upon his troth,
  They were the ugliest beasts in Devon;
And none knew why he fed them both,
  With his own hands, six days in seven.

Whene'er they heard his ring or knock,
  Quicker than thought, the village slatterns
Flung down the novel, smoothed the frock,
  And took up Mrs. Glasse, or patterns;
Adine was studying baker's bills;
  Louisa looked the queen of knitters;
Jane happened to be hemming frills;
  And Bell, by chance, was making fritters.

But all was vain; and while decay
  Came, like a tranquil moonlight, o'er him,
And found him gouty still, and gay,
  With no fair nurse to bless or bore him,
His rugged smile and easy chair,
  His dread of matrimonial lectures,
His wig, his stick, his powdered hair,
  Were themes for very strange conjectures.

Some sages thought the stars above
  Had crazed him with excess of knowledge;
Some heard he had been crost in love
  Before he came away from College;
Some darkly hinted that his Grace
  Did nothing, great or small, without him;
Some whispered, with a solemn face,
  That there was "something odd about him!"

I found him, at three scorce and ten,
A single man, but bent quite double;
Sickness was coming on him then
To take him from a world of trouble:
He prosed of slipping down the hill,
Discovered he grew older daily;
One frosty day he made his will,—
The next, he sent for Doctor Bailey.

And so he lived,—and so he died!—
When last I sat beside his pillow
He shook my hand, and "Ah!" he cried,
"Penelope must wear the willow.
Tell her I hugged her rosy chain
While life was flickering in the socket;
And say, that when I call again,
I'll bring a licence in my pocket.

"I've left my house and grounds to Fag,—
I hope his master's shoes will suit him;
And I've bequeathed to you my nag,
To feed him for my sake,—or shoot him.
The Vicar's wife will take old Fox,—
She'll find him an uncommon mouser,—
And let her husband have my box,
My Bible, and my Assmanshauser.

"Whether I ought to die or not,
My Doctors cannot quite determine;
It's only clear that I shall rot,
And be, like Priam, food for vermin.
My debts are paid: but Nature's debt
Almost escaped my recollection:
Tom!—we shall meet again —and yet
I cannot leave you my direction!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

1830.

WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED.

I.

THE COVENANTER'S LAMENT FOR BOTHWELL BRIGG.

THE men of sin prevail!
Once more the prince of this world lifts his horn;
Judah is scattered, as the chaff is borne
Before the stormy gale.

Where are our brethren? where
The good and true, the terrible and fleet?
They whom we loved, with whom we sat at meat,
With whom we kneeled in prayer?

Mangled and marred they lie
Upon the bloody pillow of their rest;
Stern Dalzell smiles, and Clavers with a jest
Spurs his fierce charger by.

So let our foes rejoice;
We to the Lord, who hears their impious boasts,
Will call for comfort; to the God of hosts
We will lift up our voice.

Give ear unto our song;
For we are wandering o'er our native land
As sheep that have no shepherd; and the hand
Of wicked men is strong.

Only to thee we bow:
Our lips have drained the fury of thy cup;
And the deep murmurs of our hearts go up
To Heaven for vengeance now.

Avenge,—oh, not our years
Of pain and wrong, the blood of martyrs shed,
The ashes heaped upon the hoary head,
The maiden's silent tears,

The babe's bread torn away,
The harvest blasted by the war-steed's hoof,
The red flame wreathing o'er the cottage roof
Judge not for these to-day!—

Is not thine own dread rod
Mocked by the proud, thy holy book disdained,
Thy name blasphemed, thy temple courts profaned?—
Avenge thyself, O God!

Break Pharaoh's iron crown;
Bind with new chains their nobles and their kings;
Wash from thine house the blood of unclean things,
And hurl their Dagon down!

Come in thine own good time!
We will abide: we have not turned from thee,
Though in a world of grief our portion be,
Of bitter grief, and crime.

Be thou our guard and guide!
Forth from the spoiler's synagogue we go,
That we may worship where the torrents flow
And where the whirwinds ride.

From lonely rocks and caves
We will pour forth our sacrifice of prayer.—
On, brethren, to the mountains! Seek we there
Safe temples, quiet graves!

II.

SIR NICHOLAS AT MARSTON MOOR.

TO horse, to horse, Sir Nicholas! the clarion's note is high;
To horse, to horse, Sir Nicholas! the big drum makes reply:
Ere this hath Lucas marched with his gallant cavaliers,
And the bray of Rupert's trumpets grows fainter on our ears.
To horse, to horse, Sir Nicholas! White Guy is at the door,
And the vulture whets his beak o'er the field of Marston Moor.

Up rose the Lady Alice from her brief and broken prayer,
And she brought a silken standard down the narrow turret stair.
Oh, many were the tears that those radiant eyes had shed,
As she worked the bright word "Glory" in the gay and glancing thread;
And mournful was the smile which o'er those beauteous features ran,
As she said, "It is your lady's gift; unfurl it in the van."

"It shall flutter, noble wench, where the best and boldest ride,
Through the steel-clad files of Skippon, and the black dragoons of Pride;
The recreant soul of Fairfax will feel a sicklier qualm,

And the rebel lips of Oliver give out a louder psalm,
When they see my lady's gew-gaw flaunt bravely on their wing,
And hear her loyal soldiers' shout, For God and for the King!"—

'Tis noon. The ranks are broken along the royal line;
They fly, the braggarts of the Court, the bullies of the Rhine:
Stout Langley's cheer is heard no more, and Astley's helm is down,
And Rupert sheathes his rapier with a curse and with a frown;
And cold Newcastle mutters, as he follows in the flight,
"The German boar had better far have supped in York to-night."

The Knight is all alone, his steel cap cleft in twain,
His good buff jerkin crimsoned o'er with many a gory stain;
Yet still he waves the standard, and cries amid the rout,
"For Church and King, fair gentlemen, spur on and fight it out!"
And now he wards a Roundhead's pike, and now he hums a stave,
And here he quotes a stage-play, and there he fells a knave.

Good speed to thee, Sir Nicholas! thou hast no thought of fear;
Good speed to thee, Sir Nicholas! but fearful odds are here.

The traitors ring thee round, and with every blow
and thrust,
"Down, down," they cry, "with Belial! down with
him to the dust!"
"I would," quoth grim old Oliver, "that Belial's
trusty sword
This day were doing battle for the Saints and for
the Lord!"

The Lady Alice sits with her maidens in her
bower;
The grey-haired warden watches from the castle's
highest tower.—
"What news, what news, old Anthony?"—"The
field is lost and won:
The ranks of war are melting as the mists beneath
the sun;
And a wounded man speeds hither,—I am old and
cannot see,
Or sure I am that sturdy step my master's step
should be!"

"I bring thee back the standard from as rude and
rough a fray
As e'er was proof of soldier's thews or theme for
minstrel's lay!
Bid Hubert fetch the silver bowl, and liquor
quantum suff.;
I'll make a shift to drain it, ere I part with boot
and buff—
Though Guy through many a gaping wound is
breathing out his life,
And I come to thee a landless man, my fond and
faithful wife!

"Sweet, we will fill our money-bags, and freight a ship for France,
And mourn in merry Paris for this poor realm's mischance;
Or, if the worst betide me, why, better axe or rope,
Than life with Lenthal for a king, and Peters for a pope!
Alas, alas, my gallant Guy!—out on the crop-eared boor,
That sent me with my standard on foot from Marston Moor!"

III.—MY LITTLE COUSINS.

"EVOI RIDETE? CERTO RIDIAMO," COSÌ FAN TUTTE.

LAUGH on, fair Cousins, for to you
All life is joyous yet;
Your hearts have all things to pursue,
And nothing to regret;
And every flower to you is fair,
And every month is May:
You've not been introduced to Care,—
Laugh on, laugh on to-day!

Old Time will fling his clouds ere long
Upon those sunny eyes;
The voice whose every word is song
Will set itself to sighs;
Your quiet slumbers,—hopes and fears
Will chase their rest away:
To-morrow you'll be shedding tears,—
Laugh on, laugh on to-day!

Oh yes, if any truth is found
  In the dull schoolman's theme,
If friendship is an empty sound,
  And love an idle dream,
If mirth, youth's playmate, feels fatigue
  Too soon on life's long way,
At least he'll run with you a league;—
  Laugh on, laugh on to-day!

Perhaps your eyes may grow more bright
  As childhood's hues depart;
You may be lovelier to the sight
  And dearer to the heart;
You may be sinless still, and see
  This earth still green and gay;
But what you are you will not be:
  Laugh on, laugh on to-day!

O'er me have many winters crept
  With less of grief than joy;
But I have learned, and toiled, and wept;
  I am no more a boy!
I've never had the gout, 'tis true;
  My hair is hardly grey;
But now I cannot laugh like you:
  Laugh on, laugh on to-day

I used to have as glad a face
  As shadowless a brow;
I once could run as blithe a race
  As you are running now;
But never mind how I behave!
  Don't interrupt your play;
And though I feel so very grave,
  Laugh on, laugh on to-day!

James Clarence Mangan.

1803—1849.

IRELAND has not yet found a Burns to immortalise her national airs any more than she has a Scott to vivify her ancient story; yet among her sons have been many true singers, the most original, if not the greatest, of whom is Mangan. John Mitchel, the authority for nearly all that is known of Mangan's life, declares that he never met a cultivated Irishman who did not prize Mangan "above all the poets that their island of song ever nursed;" and Sir Charles Gavan Duffy assigns, among recent native poets, "the first place indisputably," to Mangan, asserting that "he has not, and perhaps never had, any rival in mastery of the metrical and rhythmical resources of the English tongue."

Yet the very name of Mangan is unknown to most Englishmen, and such pieces of his as are met with in our anthologies are generally assigned to other writers, or the author is declared to be unknown. Whence this general ignorance of a true poet—of a poet whose story is one of the saddest in all literatures? Mitchel remarks, "Because he was an Irish papal rebel;" but Sir Charles Duffy's suggestion that "the systematic seclusion of Mangan's literary life robbed him of fame," is, probably, nearer the truth. Be the cause what it may, it is strange

that outside the Irish race Mangan's career and works have been so completely ignored, seeing that he left to English literature a poetic legacy well worthy preservation, and valuable enough to justify his name being rescued from obscurity.

The known facts of Mangan's life are few. He was the eldest child of a humble tradesman of Dublin, in which city, in the spring of 1803, the poet was born. His father appears to have abandoned the boy to a relative, to whom Mangan is said to have been indebted for the education which he received at a respectable academy until his fifteenth year. He then became copyist in a scrivener's office, where his excellent writing procured him a small weekly salary. As soon as he began to earn money his relatives found him out, and compelled him to divide his pittance amongst them. For seven years the unfortunate lad toiled at the scrivener's, and then, for a further three years, as clerk at an attorney's, all the time, so it is asserted, supporting his parents, sisters, and even a brother, out of his scanty remuneration. Of this period of his life Mangan himself has written: "I was obliged to work seven years of the ten from five in the morning, winter and summer, to eleven at night; and during the three remaining years, nothing but a special Providence could have saved me from suicide. The misery of my own mind; my natural tendency to loneliness, poetry, and self-analysis; the disgusting obscenities and horrible blasphemies of those associated with me; the persecutions I was obliged to endure, and which I never avenged but by acts of kindness; the close air of the room, and the perpetual smoke of the chimney,—all these

destroyed my constitution. No! I am wrong; it was not even all these that destroyed me. In seeking to escape from this misery, I had laid the foundation of that evil habit which has proved my ruin." During this terrible time, instead of affection and gratitude, the unfortunate youth gained nothing from his relatives but unkindness; a friend in whom he had trusted proved treacherous, and the girl whom he loved, after having encouraged his hopes, sent him adrift. His paraphrase of Rückert's well-known ballad, which, like so many of his translations, Mangan contrived to imbue with his own feelings, is believed to refer to this crowning grief :—

"I saw her once, one little while, and then no more;
'Twas Paradise on earth awhile, and then no more.
Ah! what avail my vigils pale, my magic lore?

She shone before my eyes awhile, and then no more.
The shallop of my peace is wrecked on Beauty's shore;
By Hope's fair isle it rode awhile, and then no more."

There is much in these lines that sounds like an echo of Poe's "Raven," but at the time when they were written Mangan could not have seen the celebrated Transatlantic poem. Frequently, indeed, there are other similar vague shadowings of Edgar Poe in his Irish contemporary's work, but Mangan, despite his fluency of language and richness of rhyme, never approached the American poet in artistic execution.

The misery at home, and the contempt of outsiders, drove the unfortunate, shrinking man to seek solace, as he has confessed, in other consolation than literature. "Baffled, beaten, mocked, and all alone amidst the wrecks of his world," says

John Mitchel, "is it wonderful that he sought, at times, to escape from consciousness by taking for bread, opium, and for water, brandy." At times, he made efforts to give up such stimulants, but, in the end, they drove him to an untimely grave.

Mangan, doubtless, began to versify at an early age, but his first known pieces were published about 1830. Most of his contributions to literature purport to be translations from various languages, but beyond German, he probably knew little of any foreign speech. Irish he did not know, and merely versified literal versions made for him by others, whilst as regards his supposed renderings from Oriental and other tongues, it must be confessed that it was his wont to palm off his own poems as translations, because, as he once remarked, "Hafiz was more acceptable to editors than Mangan."

After the poet left the attorney's office, his story for some years remained a blank, "a blank into which he entered a bright-haired youth and emerged a withered and stricken man." Eventually his poems attracted notice, and some kind-hearted countrymen and *literati* exerted themselves on his behalf. He was rescued from the depths into which he had fallen, and employment found for him in the University Library, Dublin. This occupation not only afforded the prematurely aged man means of subsistence, but also the long wished-for opportunities of study.

During this brightest period of his life he produced his best poems, and became a regular contributor to the leading Irish periodicals, in which publications much of his sweetest verse is still buried. In September 1837, he began contributing to the *Dublin*

University Magazine a series of poems styled "Literæ Orientales," followed later on and continued until his death, by "Lays of Many Lands." These pieces, purporting to be translations from various Oriental and other languages, are mostly original and contain much of Mangan's highest achievements. "The Time of the Roses" is a case in point; it does not appear in his collected works, and yet nothing can be more characteristic of his powers than such musical lines as these:—

> "See the young lilies, their scymitar-petals
> Glancing like silver 'mid earthlier metals:
> Dews of the brightest in life-giving showers
> Fall all the night on these luminous flowers.
> Each of them sparkles afar like a gem,
> Wouldst thou be smiling and happy like them?
> O, follow all counsel that Pleasure proposes;
> It dies, it flies, the time of the Roses!"

In 1845, under the title of *Anthologia Germania*, he published two volumes of translations from the German, and in them much of his best work is to be found. His renderings from the Irish, on the other hand, which were issued in two posthumous publications, are very disappointing and inferior; generally they are poor in execution and spiritless in tone, while in the mystic and weird minstrelsy of the Teuton, Mangan found a longing for something beyond this life akin to his own vague aspirations.

Of the poet's later life there is little to tell, and that little one would wish untold. His early privations and later intemperance are declared to have reduced him to a state of partial insanity. An attack of cholera, induced through privation, brought him to the last extremity. Admitted to Meath

Hospital, he died there on the 20th June, 1849, in his forty-seventh year.

Mangan has been described as "below the middle height and of slender proportions; the ashy paleness of his face was lighted up by eyes of extraordinary brilliancy." His manners are considered by Mr. O'Daly to be best described by these lines from his favourite Schiller:—

> "His dreams were of great objects;
> He walked amidst us of a silent spirit,
> Communing with himself; yet I have known him
> Transported on a sudden into utterance
> Of strange conceptions; kindling into splendour.
> His soul revealed itself, and he spake so
> That we looked round perplexed upon each other,
> Not knowing whether it were craziness,
> Or whether it were a god that spake in him!"

Great as his merits undoubtedly are, Mangan has been so overpraised by his countrymen, who have endeavoured to give a political colouring to his writings, that English critics have been prejudiced against him, and have deemed him a mere provincial poetaster. As an original poet, it is difficult to assign him as high a rank as his countrymen claim, but as a translator his merits are great; no one has transmitted the *spirit* of German ballad lore better than Mangan has, often, indeed, giving it a charm greater than the original possesses. He recognised his own peculiar powers, and in "The Nameless One," one of his finest pieces, characteristically portrays at once his own career and his own idiosyncrasies.

JOHN H. INGRAM.

POEMS ON ORIENTAL SUBJECTS.

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

I.—THE TIME OF THE ROSES.

(FROM THE TURKISH OF MESEEHI. OB. 1512.)

1837

MORNING is blushing; the gay nightingales
Warble their exquisite songs in the vales;
Spring, like a spirit, floats everywhere,
Shaking sweet spice-showers loose from her hair;
Murmurs half-musical sounds from the stream,
Breathes in the valley and shines in the beam.
In, in at the portals that Youth uncloses,
It hastes, it wastes, the Time of the Roses!

Meadows, and gardens, and sun-lighted glades
Palaces, terraces, grottoes, and shades
Woo thee; a fairy-bird sings in thine ear,
Come and be happy!—an Eden is here!
Knowest thou whether for thee there be any
Years in the Future? Ah! think on how many
A young heart under the mould reposes,
Nor feels how wheels the Time of the Roses!

In the red light of the many-leaved rose,
Mahomet's wonderful mantle re-glows.
Gaudier far, but as blooming and tender,
Tulips and martagons revel in splendour.
Drink from the Chalice of Joy, ye who may!
Youth is a flower of early decay,
And Pleasure a monarch that Age deposes,
When past, at last, the Time of the Roses!

See the young lilies, their scymitar-petals
Glancing like silver 'mid earthier metals:
Dews of the brightest in life-giving showers
Fall all the night on these luminous flowers,
Each of them sparkles afar like a gem;
Wouldst thou be smiling and happy like them?
O, follow all counsel that Pleasure proposes;
It dies, it flies, the Time of the Roses!

Pity the roses! Each rose is a maiden,
Prankt, and with jewels of dew overladen:
Pity the maidens! The moon of their bloom
Rises, to set in the cells of the tomb.
Life has its Winter:—When Summer is gone,
Maidens, like roses, lie stricken and wan.
Though bright as the Burning Bush of Moses,
Soon fades, fair maids, the Time of your Roses!

Lustre and odours and blossoms and flowers,
All that is richest in gardens and bowers,
Teach us morality, speak of Mortality,
Whisper that Life is a sweet Unreality!
Death is the end of that lustre, those odours;
Brilliance and Beauty are gloomy foreboders
To him who knows what this world of woes is,
And sees how flees the Time of the Roses!

Heed them not, hear them not! Morning is blushing,
Perfumes are wandering, fountains are gushing.
What though the rose, like a virgin forbidden,
Long under leafy pavilion lay hidden;
Now far around as the vision can stretch,
Wreaths for the pencils of angels to sketch,
Festoon the tall hills the landscape discloses.
O! sweet, though fleet, is the Time of the Roses!

Now the air—drunk from the breath of the flowers—
Faints like a bride whom her bliss overpowers;
Such and so rich is the fragrance that fills
Æther and cloud that its essence distils,
As through thin lily-leaves earthward again,
Sprinkling with rose-water garden and plain.
O! joyously after the Winter closes,
Returns and burns the Time of the Roses!

O! for some magical vase to imprison
All the sweet incense that yet has not risen!
And the swift pearls that, radiant and rare,
Glisten and drop through the hollows of Air!
Vain! they depart, both the Beaming and Fragrant!
So, too, Hope leaves us, and Love proves a vagrant.
Too soon their entrancing illusion closes,
It cheats, it fleets, the Time of the Roses!

Tempest, and Thunder, and War were abroad;
Riot and Turbulence triumphed unawed;
Soliman rose, and the thunders were hushed,
Faction was prostrate, and Turbulence crushed;
Once again Peace in her gloriousness rallies;
Once again shine the glad skies on our valleys;
And sweetly anew the poet composes
His lays in praise of the Time of the Roses!

I, too, Meseehi, already renowned,
Centuries hence by my songs shall be crowned;
Far as the stars of the wide Heaven shine,
Men shall rejoice in this carol of mine.
Leila! Thou art as a rose unto me:
Think on the nightingale singing for thee;
For he who on love like thine reposes,
Least heeds how speeds the Time of the Roses!

II.—GHAZEL: THE WORLD.

BY KEMAL-OOMI.

BORN IN CARAMANIA. OB. 1446. LIES BURIED AT ADRIANOPLE.

1838.

TO this khan—and *from* this khan
How many pilgrims came—and went, too!
In this khan—and *by* this khan
What arts were spent—what hearts were rent, too!
To this khan—and *from* this khan
Which for penance Man is sent to,
Many a van and caravan
Crowded came—and shrouded went, too!
Christian man and Moslem man,
Guebre, Heathen, Jew, and Gentoo,
To this khan—and *from* this khan
Weeping came—and sleeping went, too!
A riddle this since Time began
Which many a sage his mind hath bent to;
All came and went, but never man
Knew whence they came or where they went to!

III.—PASSAGE

FROM HUDAYI II., NATIVE OF ANATOLIA. OB. 1628. LIES BURIED NEAR CONSTANTINOPLE.

1838.

TRUST not the World or Time; they are liar-mates,
Ya Hu![1]
Wealth borrows wings and Woman goes her way;
Ya Hu!

Into the Old House with the Ebon Gates[2]
Ya Hu!
Who enters is but guest and must not stay;
Ya Hu!
Look not upon the sun, for that shall die;
Ya Hu!
Love not the roses, for they must decay;
Ya Hu!
The child is caught by all that dupes the eye;
Ya Hu!
The man should gird his loins; he cannot stay!
Ya Hu!
From moon to moon Time rolleth as a river.
Ya Hu!
Though Night will soon o'erdark thy life's last ray
Ya Hu!
Earth is the prison of the True Believer,
Ya Hu!
And who in prison stipulates to stay?
Ya Hu!
Up, dreamer, up! What takest Life to be?
Ya Hu!
Are centuries not made of Night and Day?
Ya Hu!
Call now on God while He will list to thee!
Ya Hu!
The Caravan moves on; it will not stay!
Ya Hu!
Remember Him whom Heaven and Earth adore!
Ya Hu!
Fast, and deny thyself; give alms and pray;
Ya Hu!
Thy bark drifts hourly towards the Phantom-shore;
Ya Hu!

The sails are up; the vessel will not stay!
Ya Hu!
As yet the Accursing Scroll is incomplete;
Ya Hu!
But Scales and Bridge[3] maintain their dread array;
Ya Hu!
Now art thou here, *now* at the Judgment-Seat!
Ya Hu!
For Death and Justice brook no long delay!
Ya Hu!
O, trust Hudayi he alone from birth
Ya Hu!
Is guided by the Guardian Four alway,
Ya Hu!
He is alone the Friend of God on Earth,
Ya Hu!
Who visits Earth, but doth not sigh to stay,
Ya Hu!

IV.—THE HUNDRED-LEAFED ROSE.

By Mohammed Ben Osman Ben Ali Nakkash, called Lamii, or, The Dazzling.

1838.

I AM, saith the Rose, as the Voice from the Bush
That spake upon Horeb to Mose:
Hence hangs, like Manszur,[4] her head with a blush
The Hundred-leafèd Rose.
Like crisped gold, laid fold over fold,
Like the sun that at Eventide glows,
Like the furnace-bed of Al-Khalill[5]
Is the Hundred-leafèd Rose.
Her cloak is green, with a gloomy sheen,
Like the garment of beauteous Jose,

All prisoned round by a sentinelled wall
Is the Hundred-leafèd Rose.
Like Issa,[6] whose breath first woke from Death
The souls in this world of woes,
She vivifies all the fainting air,
The Hundred-leafèd Rose.
Profound as the wells where Harut and Marut
Of Babel are hung by the toes,[7]
Are the damask deeps where the odour sleeps
Of the Hundred-leafèd Rose.
As the Prophet's word in the Solitudes
Made the doors of the rock unclose,
The Summer's voice unrolls the buds
Of the Hundred-leafèd Rose.
Like Solomon's throne in olden years
Her crimson richness shews;
And the Dives protect with a ring of spears
The seal of the sacred Rose.[8]
The Flower of Flowers as a convent towers
Where Virtue and Truth repose;
The leaves are the halls, and the convent-walls
Are the thorns that fence the Rose.
Like Balkis Queen for her queenly mien,
Like Balkis[9] for queenly clothes,
Is the bride of the bowers, the pride of the flowers,
The Hundred-leafèd Rose.
Like Daoud[10] King on the psaltery playing,
Each wooing Zephyr that goes
At will from flower to flower a-Maying
Hath sweetest airs for the Rose.
Who sees the sun set round and red
Over Lebanon's brow of snows,
May dream how burns in a lily-bed
The Hundred-leafèd Rose.

The sun is an archer swift and strong,
With a myriad silver bows,
And each beam is a barb to pierce the garb
Of the Hundred-leafèd Rose.
While the moon all the long, long, spectral night
Her light o'er the garden throws,
Like a beauty shrinking away from sight
Is the Hundred-leafèd Rose.
Like the tears of a maiden, whose heart, ever laden
With sorrowful thought, overflows
At her weeping eye, are the dews that lie
On the feminine cheek of the Rose.
As Man after Fame, as the moth round the flame,
As the steer when his partner lows,
Is the Nightingale, when his fruitless wail
Is poured to the silent Rose.
A Princess tranced by a talisman's power,
Who bloomingly slumbers, nor knows
That the sorcerer's spell encircles her bower
Is the Hundred-leafèd Rose.
Alas! that her kiosk of emerald rare
Should be powerless all to oppose
The venom of Serpent Envy's glare[11]
When its eye is fixed on the Rose.
A virgin alone in an alien land,
Whose friends are but smiling foes,
A palace plundered by every hand
Is the Hundred-leafèd Rose.
O! why should she dwell in a desert dell
With the darnel and mandrake?—Those
Were never meet mates for her, the proud,
The Hundred-leafèd Rose
In an Eden which Heat hath never consumed,
Where Winter-night never froze,

Should only bloom, should ever have bloomed,
The Hundred-leafèd Rose.
O! give her the gardens of Peristan,[12]
Where only the musk-wind blows,
And where she need fear nor Storm nor Man,
The Hundred-leafèd Rose.
For the Summer's hand of love and light
In the luminous flowers it strows
Earth's valleys withal, drops none so bright
As the Hundred-leafèd Rose.

Hail, Suliman Sultan! Shadow of God!
Great Prince, whose bounty bestows
And scatters jewels like dust abroad,
As the Wind the leaves of the Rose.
The pining world felt sick and sad,
And labored with troubles and throes
Till thine avatar bade all be glad,
Like the young Spring's earliest Rose.
Now light is in Heaven and health upon Earth,
June joyously comes and goes
Rich Plenty has drowned the remembrance of Dearth,
And the Thistle gives way to the Rose.
The shepherd is piping a tune of delight,
The husbandman reaps as he sows;
The gardens forget the black seasons of blight,
And Summer is vain of the Rose.
Reign, Sultan, for ever! and this be thy praise,
Though Eulogy overflows
With the marvels thy marvellous era displays,
That thou raisedst the perishing Rose.[13]

V.—THE TIME OF THE BARMECIDES.

(FROM THE ARABIC.)

MY eyes are filmed, my beard is grey,
I am bowed with the weight of years;
I would I were stretched in my bed of clay,
With my long-lost youth's compeers!
For back to the Past, though the thought brings woe,
My memory ever glides,—
To the old, old time, long, long ago,
The Time of the Barmecides.
To the old, old time, long, long ago,
The Time of the Barmecides.

Then Youth was mine, and a fierce wild will,
And an iron arm in war,
And a fleet foot high up on Ishkar's hill,
When the watch-lights glimmered afar,
And a barb as fiery as any I know
That Khoord or Beddaween rides,
Ere my friends lay low,—long, long ago,
In the Time of the Barmecides,
Ere my friends lay low,—long, long ago,
In the Time of the Barmecides.

One golden goblet illumed my board,
One silver dish was there;
At hand my tried Karamanian sword
Lay always bright and bare,
For those were the days when the angry blow
Supplanted the word that chides,—
When hearts could glow—long, long ago,
In the Time of the Barmecides,
When hearts could glow—long, long ago,
In the Time of the Barmecides.

Through city and desert my mates and I
  Were free to rove and roam,
Our diapered canopy the deep of the sky,
  Or the roof of the palace-dome—
O! ours was that vivid life to and fro
  Which only Sloth derides:—
Men spent Life so, long, long ago,
  In the Time of the Barmecides,
Men spent Life so, long, long ago,
  In the Time of the Barmecides.

I see rich Bagdad once again,
  With its turrets of Moorish mould,
And the Khalif's twice five hundred men,
  Whose binishes flamed with gold;
I call up many a gorgeous show
  Which the Pall of Oblivion hides—
All passed like snow, long, long ago,
  With the Time of the Barmecides;
All passed like snow, long, long ago,
  With the Time of the Barmecides!

But mine eye is dim, and my beard is grey
  And I bend with the weight of years;—
May I soon go down to the House of Clay
  Where slumber my Youth's compeers!
For with them and the Past, tho' the thought wakes woe,
  My memory ever abides,
And I mourn for the times gone long ago,
  For the Times of the Barmecides!
I mourn for the times gone long ago,
  For the Times of the Barmecides!

VI.—THE WAIL OF THE THREE KHALENDEERS.

(FROM THE OTTOMAN.)

LA' laha, il Allah![14]
Here we meet, we three, at length,
Armah, Osman, Perizad:
Shorn of all our grace and strength,
Poor, and old, and very sad!
We have lived, but live no more;
Life has lost its gloss for us,
Since the days we spent of yore
Boating down the Bosphorus!
La' laha, il Allah!
The Bosphorus, the Bosphorus!
Old Time brought home no loss for us;
We felt full of health and heart
Upon the foamy Bosphorus.
La' laha, il Allah!
Days indeed! A shepherd's tent
Served us then for house and fold;
All to whom we gave or lent,
Paid us back a thousand fold.
Troublous years by myriads wailed,
Rarely had a cross for us,
Never when we gaily sailed,
Singing down the Bosphorus.
La' laha, il Allah!
The Bosphorus, the Bosphorus!
There never came a cross for us,
While we daily, gaily sailed,
Adown the meadowy Bosphorus.
La' laha, il Allah!
Blithe as birds we flew along,
Laughed and quaffed and stared about;
Wine and roses, mirth and song

Were what most we cared about.
Fame we left for quacks to seek,
Gold was dust and dross for us,
While we lived from week to week,
Boating down the Bosphorus.
La' laha, il Allah!
The Bosphorus, the Bosphorus!
And gold was dust and dross for us,
While we lived from week to week,
Aboating down the Bosphorus.

La' laha, il Allah!
Friends we were, and would have shared
Purses, had we twenty full.
If we spent, or if we spared,
Still our funds were plentiful.
Save the hours we past apart
Time brought home no loss for us;
We felt full of hope and heart
While we clove the Bosphorus.
La' laha, il Allah!
The Bosphorus, the Bosphorus!
For life has lost its gloss for us,
Since the days we spent of yore
Upon the pleasant Bosphorus!

La' laha, il Allah!
Ah! for youth's delirious hours,
Man pays well in after days.
When quenched hopes and palsied powers
Mock his love-and-laughter days.
Thorns and thistles on our path,
Took the place of moss for us,
Till false fortune's tempest wrath
Drove us from the Bosphorus.
La' laha, il Allah!

The Bosphorus, the Bosphorus!
When thorns took place of moss for us,
Gone was all! Our hearts were graves
Deep, deeper than the Bosphorus!

La' laha, il Allah!
Gone is all! In one abyss
Lie Health, Youth, and Merriment!
All we've learned amounts to this—
Life's a sad experiment;
What it is we trebly feel
Pondering what it was for us,
When our shallop's bounding keel
Clove the joyous Bosphorus.
La' laha, il Allah!
The Bosphorus, the Bosphorus!
We wail for what life was for us
When our shallop's bounding keel
Clove the joyous Bosphorus!

THE WARNING.

La' laha, il Allah!
Pleasure tempts, yet man has none
Save himself, t' accuse, if her
Temptings prove, when all is done,
Lures hung out by Lucifer.
Guard your fire in youth, O Friends!
Manhood's is but Phosphorus,
And bad luck attends and ends
Boatings down the Bosphorus!
La' laha, il Allah!
The Bosphorus, the Bosphorus!
Youth's fire soon wanes to Phosphorus,
And slight luck or grace attends
Your boaters down the Bosphorus!

VII.—THE KARAMANIAN EXILE.

(FROM THE OTTOMAN.)

I SEE thee ever in my dreams,
Karaman!
Thy hundred hills, thy thousand streams,
Karaman! O Karaman!
As when thy gold-bright morning gleams,
As when the deepening sunset seams
With lines of light thy hills and streams,
Karaman!
So thou loomest on my dreams,
Karaman! O Karaman!

The hot bright plains, the sun, the skies,
Karaman!
Seem death-black marble to mine eyes,
Karaman! O Karaman!
I turn from summer's blooms and dyes;
Yet in my dreams thou dost arise
In welcome glory to my eyes,
Karaman!
In thee my life of life yet lies,
Karaman!
Thou still art holy in mine eyes
Karaman! O Karaman

Ere my fighting years were come,
Karaman!
Troops were few in Erzerome,
Karaman! O Karaman!
Their fiercest came from Erzerome,
They came from Ukhbar's palace dome,
They dragged me forth from thee, my home,
Karaman!

Thee, my own, my mountain home,
Karaman!
In life and death, my spirit's home,
Karaman! O Karaman!

O, none of all my sisters ten,
Karaman!
Loved like me my fellow-men,
Karaman! O Karaman!
I was mild as milk till then,
I was soft as silk till then;
Now my breast is as a den,
Karaman!
Foul with blood and bones of men,
Karaman!
With blood and bones of slaughtered men,
Karaman! O Karaman!

My boyhood's feelings newly born,
Karaman!
Withered like young flowers uptorn,
Karaman! O Karaman!
And in their stead sprang weed and thorn,
What once I loved now moves my scorn;
My burning eyes are dried to horn,
Karaman!
I hate the blessed light of morn,
Karaman!
It maddens me, the face of morn,
Karaman! O Karaman!

The Spahi wears a tyrant's chains,
Karaman!
But bondage worse than this remains,
Karaman! O Karaman!

His heart is black with million stains;
Thereon, as on Kaf's blasted plains,
Shall never more fall dews and rains,
Karaman!
Save poison-dews and bloody rains,
Karaman!
Hell's poison dews and bloody rains,
Karaman! O Karaman!

But life at worst must end ere long,
Karaman!
Azreel[15] avengeth every wrong,
Karaman! O Karaman!
Of late my thoughts rove more among
Thy fields; o'ershadowing fancies throng
My mind, and texts of bodeful song,
Karaman!
Azreel is terrible and strong,
Karaman!
His lightning sword smites all ere long,
Karaman! O Karaman!

There's care to-night in Ukhbar's halls,
Karaman!
There's hope, too, for his trodden thralls,
Karaman! O Karaman!
What lights flash red along yon walls?
Hark! hark!—the muster-trumpet calls!—
I see the sheen of spears and shawls,
Karaman!
The foe! the foe,—they scale the walls,
Karaman!
To-night Muràd or Ukhbar falls,
Karaman! O Karaman!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

I.—DARK ROSALEEN.

O, MY Dark Rosaleen,
Do not sigh, do not weep!
The priests are on the ocean green,
They march along the Deep.
There's wine . . . from the royal Pope,
Upon the ocean green;
And Spanish ale shall give you hope,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,
Shall give you health, and help, and hope,
My Dark Rosaleen!

Over hills, and through dales,
Have I roamed for your sake;
All yesterday I sailed with sails
On river and on the lake.
The Erne, . . . at its highest flood,
I dashed across unseen,
For there was lightning in my blood
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
Oh! there was lightning in my blood,
Red lightning lightened through my blood,
My Dark Rosaleen!

All day long in unrest,
To and fro, do I move.
The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love!

The heart . . . in my bosom faints
To think of you, my Queen,
My life of life, my saint of saints,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
My Dark Rosaleen!

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
Are my lot, night and noon,
To see your bright face clouded so,
Like to the mournful moon.
But yet . . . will I rear your throne
Again in golden sheen;
'Tis you shall reign, shall reign alone,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
'Tis you shall have the golden throne,
'Tis you shall reign, and reign alone,
My Dark Rosaleen!

Over dews, over sands,
Will I fly, for your weal:
Your holy delicate white hands
Shall girdle me with steel.
At home . . . in your emerald bowers,
From morning's dawn till e'en,
You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My fond Rosaleen!
You'll think of me through Daylight's hours.
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,
My Dark Rosaleen!

I could scale the blue air,
I could plough the high hills,
Oh, I could kneel all night in prayer,
To heal your many ills!
And one . . . beamy smile from you
Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My fond Rosaleen!
Would give me life and soul anew,
A second life, a soul anew,
My Dark Rosaleen!

O! the Erne shall run red
With redundance of blood,
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,
And flames wrap hill and wood,
And gun-peal, and slogan cry,
Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
The Judgment Hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My Dark Rosaleen!

II.—THE ONE MYSTERY.

'TIS idle! we exhaust and squander
The glittering mine of thought in vain;
All-baffled reason cannot wander,
Beyond her chain.

The flood of life runs dark—dark clouds
Make lampless night around its shore:
The dead, where are they? In their shrouds—
Man knows no more.

Evoke the ancient and the past,
Will one illumining star arise?
Or must the film, from first to last,
O'erspread thine eyes?
When life, love, glory, beauty, wither,
Will wisdom's page, or science' chart,
Map out for thee the region whither
Their shades depart?

Supposest thou the wondrous powers,
To high imagination given,
Pale types of what shall yet be ours,
When earth is heaven?
When this decaying shell is cold,
Oh! sayest thou the soul shall climb
That magic mount she trod of old,
Ere childhood's time?

And shall the sacred pulse that thrilled,
Thrill once again to glory's name?
And shall the conquering love that filled
All earth with flame,
Reborn, revived, renewed, immortal,
Resume his reign in prouder might,
A sun beyond the ebon portal,
Of death and night?

No more, no more—with aching brow,
And restless heart, and burning brain,
We ask the When, the Where, the How,
And ask in vain.
And all philosophy, all faith,
All earthly—all celestial lore,
Have but one voice, which only saith—
Endure—adore!

III.—THE NAMELESS ONE.

BALLAD.

ROLL forth, my song, like the rushing river,
That sweeps along to the mighty sea;
God will inspire me while I deliver
My soul of thee!

Tell thou the world, when my bones lie whitening
Amid the last homes of youth and eld,
That there was once one whose veins ran lightning
No eye beheld.

Tell how his boyhood was one drear night-hour,
How shone for *him*, through his griefs and gloom,
No star of all heaven sends to light our
Path to the tomb.

Roll on, my song, and to after ages
Tell how, disdaining all earth can give,
He would have taught men, from wisdom's pages,
The way to live.

And tell how trampled, derided, hated,
And worn by weakness, disease, and wrong,
He fled for shelter to God, who mated
His soul with song—

With song which alway, sublime or vapid,
Flowed like a rill in the morning-beam,
Perchance not deep, but intense and rapid—
A mountain stream.

Tell how this Nameless, condemned for years long
To herd with demons from hell beneath,
Saw things that made him, with groans and tears, long
For even death.

Go on to tell how, with genius wasted,
Betrayed in friendship, befooled in love,
With spirit shipwrecked, and young hopes blasted,
He still, still strove.

Till, spent with toil, dreeing death for others,
And some whose hands should have wrought for *him;*
(If children live not for sires and mothers),
His mind grew dim.

And he fell far through that pit abysmal,
The gulf and grave of Marlowe and Burns,
And pawned his soul for the devil's dismal
Stock of returns.

But yet redeemed it in days of darkness,
And shapes and signs of the final wrath,
When death, in hideous and ghastly starkness,
Stood on his path.

And tell how now, amid wreck and sorrow,
And want, and sickness, and houseless nights,
He bides in calmness the silent morrow,
That no ray lights.

And lives he still, then? Yes! Old and hoary
At thirty-nine, from despair and woe,
He lives, enduring what future story
Will never know.

Him grant a grave to, ye pitying noble,
Deep in your bosoms! There let him dwell!
He, too, had tears for all souls in trouble,
Here and in hell.

IV.—TWENTY GOLDEN YEARS AGO.

O, THE rain, the weary, dreary rain,
How it plashes on the window-sill!
Night, I guess too, must be on the wane,
Strass and Gass[17] around are grown so still.
Here I sit, with coffee in my cup—
Ah! 'twas rarely I beheld it flow
In the tavern where I loved to sup
Twenty golden years ago!

Twenty years ago, alas!—but stay—
On my life, 'tis half-past twelve o'clock!
After all, the hours *do* slip away—
Come, here goes to burn another block!
For the night, or morn, is wet and cold;
And my fire is dwindling rather low:—
I had fire enough, when young and bold
Twenty golden years ago.

Dear! I don't feel well at all, somehow:
Few in Weimar dream how bad I am;
Floods of tears grow common with me now,
High-Dutch floods, that Reason cannot dam.
Doctors think I'll neither live nor thrive
If I mope at home so—I don't know—
Am I living *now?* I *was* alive
Twenty golden years ago.

Wifeless, friendless, flaggonless, alone,
Not quite bookless, though, unless I chuse,
Left with nought to do, except to groan,
Not a soul to woo, except the Muse—
O! this is hard for *me* to bear,
Me, who whilome lived so much *en haut*,
Me, who broke all hearts like china-ware,
Twenty golden years ago!

Perhaps 'tis better;—time's defacing waves,
Long have quenched the radiance of my brow—
They who curse me nightly from their graves,
Scarce could love me were they living now;
But my loneliness hath darker ills—
Such dun duns as Conscience, Thought and Co.,
Awful Gorgons! worse than tailors' bills
Twenty golden years ago!

Did I paint a fifth of what I feel,
O, how plaintive you would ween I was!
But I won't, albeit I have a deal
More to wail about than Kerner has!
Kerner's tears are wept for withered flowers,
Mine for withered hopes, my scroll of woe
Dates, alas! from youth's deserted bowers,
Twenty golden years ago!

Yet, may Deutschland's bardlings flourish long,
Me, I tweak no beak among them;—hawks
Must not pounce on hawks: besides, in song
I could once beat all of them by chalks.
Though you find me as I near my goal,
Sentimentalizing like Rousseau,
O! I had a grand Byronian soul
Twenty golden years ago!

Tick-tick, tick-tick !—not a sound save Time's,
And the windgust as it drives the rain—
Tortured torturer of reluctant rhymes,
Go to bed, and rest thine aching brain !
Sleep !—no more the dupe of hopes or schemes ;
Soon thou sleepest where the thistles blow—
Curious anticlimax to thy dreams
Twenty golden years ago !

V.—THE SAW-MILL.

(FROM THE GERMAN.)

MY path lay towards the Mourne again,
But I stopped to rest by the hill-side
That glanced adown o'er the sunken glen,
Where the Saw- and Water-*mills* hide,
Which now, as then,
The Saw- and Water-mills hide.

And there, as I lay reclined on the hill,
Like a man made by sudden *qualm* ill,
I heard the water in the Water-mill,
And I saw the saw in the Saw-mill !
As I thus lay still,
I saw the saw in the Saw-mill !

The saw, the breeze, and the humming bees,
Lulled me into a dreamy reverie,
Till the objects round me, hills, mills, trees,
Seemed grown alive all and every,
By slow degrees
Took life as it were, all and every !

Anon the sound of the waters grew
To a Mourne-ful ditty,
And the song of the tree that the saw sawed through,
Disturbed my spirit with pity,
Began to subdue
My spirit with tenderest pity!

"Oh, wanderer! the hour that brings thee back
Is of all meet hours the meetest.
Thou now, in sooth, art on the Track,
Art nigher to Home than thou weetest;
Thou hast thought Time slack,
But his flight has been of the fleetest!

"For thee it is that I dree such pain
As when wounded, even a plank will;
My bosom is pierced, is rent in twain,
That thine may ever bide tranquil,
May ever remain
Henceforward untroubled and tranquil.

"In a few days more, most Lonely One!
Shall I, as a narrow ark, veil
Thine eyes from the glare of the world and sun
'Mong the urns in yonder dark vale,
In the cold and dun
Recesses of yonder dark vale!

"For this grieve not! Thou knowest what thanks
The Weary-souled and Meek owe
To Death!"—I awoke, and heard four planks
Fall down with a saddening echo.
I heard four planks
Fall down with a hollow echo.

NOTES TO POEMS

BY JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

1 The cry of the Howling Dervishes.

2 The World.

3 The scales of Judgment, one of which hangs over Paradise, and the other over Hell. The Bridge is laid over the midst of Hell, and is finer than a hair, and sharper than the edge of a sword, and those who cannot pass this bridge fall into Hell.—Sale's *Prelim. Disc.*

4 An Arabian doctor of laws put to death for claiming Divine honours. The allusion is to his confusion at the place of execution.

5 Abraham, who according to tradition, was cast into a fiery furnace by Nimrod for refusing to pay him Divine honours. The furnace immediately became a bed of Roses.

6 Jesus Christ.

7 Two fallen angels, teachers of sorcery, condemned to remain suspended by the feet in separate wells of Babylon to the Day of Judgment.

8 The seal ring of Suleiman Djared, who, by means of it, exercised unlimited power over the Dives and Genii.

9 The Queen of Sheba.

10 David.

11 An allusion to the belief that some jewels have the power of blinding serpents, and rendering their venom innoxious.

12 Fairy-land.

13 Thou causedst a decaying empire to flourish anew.

14 God alone is all-merciful.

15 The angel of death.

16 The Black little Rose, *i.e.* Erin.

17 Street and lane.

Richard Henry Horne.

1803—1884.

Richard Henry Horne was born on the 1st of January 1803. The name of Hengist which he used in his old age was not given him at his baptism, but was reminiscent of a friend in the Australian bush, whose patronymic Horne, for some reason, chose to adopt. His parents intended that he should enter the army; but, before his education was seriously directed to that end, he was at the school of Mr. Clarke of Edmonton. One of his associates there and elsewhere in his youth was Charles Wells, the author of "Joseph and his Brethren"; and, although not at the school till after Keats had left it, Horne used to tell with some *gusto* how he once distinguished himself by throwing a snowball at the future author of "Endymion" as he sat in the gig of that Mr. Hammond, surgeon, to whom he was apprenticed. Subsequently, Horne was sent to the Military College at Sandhurst, where his career came to an abrupt conclusion through some high-spirited breach of discipline. In default of the military career proposed for him, he entered the Mexican naval service, and served as a midshipman in the Mexican war, passing through its several actions, inclusive of the siege of Vera Cruz and the capture of the fortress of San Juan Ulloa. The account of these incidents, which appeared in *The*

Monthly Repository, over the signature "M. I. D.," was in fact a section of Horne's autobiography.

The Mexican war did not last long enough to bring the high-mettled young man down to his literary bearings and cure him of the spirit of adventure. Before leaving Mexico to rough it elsewhere, he had two narrow escapes—one when, with over-weening confidence in his powers as a swimmer, he was bathing in the shark-infested Bay of Vera Cruz, and was chased by a shark, and the other from an attack of yellow fever,—the only illness of which at the age of eighty the vigorous old poet had any remembrance. From Mexico he travelled into the United States. He gathered first-hand impressions of savage life at the encampments of the Red Indians, and visited the Falls of Niagara, where he got some ribs broken in an accident. He suffered shipwreck in the Gulf of St. Lawrence; but he did not write the book entitled "The Adventures of Naufragus," which has been frequently attributed to him, perhaps in consequence of the shipwreck episode in his actual life. After much stirring adventure, Horne's longings turned homewards. Starting from Nova Scotia in a timber vessel, he encountered fresh adventures; in the first place the crew mutinied; and in the second place the ship took fire. Horne, however, was destined to pass unscathed through a good deal of fire and water, both actually and metaphorically; and in 1828 we find him safe in England, making what may be termed his literary *début*. In that year a poem from his pen entitled "Hecatompylos" filled a closely printed page in *The Athenæum*, then recently started under the editorship of Silk Buckingham. But the poet's first

separate appeal to the public was a prose work which attracted much attention, and obtained many enemies for its author. This was the "Exposition of the False Medium and Barriers excluding Men of Genius from the Public," which appeared in 1833. Horne, who was something of a draughtsman, himself lithographed the frontispiece — a portrait of Cardinal Bentivoglio, copied from an old print. This early attack on middlemen in the world of letters, and the pugnacious traditions which the young author inherited from his own work, doubtless did much to hinder him from entire success when, in later years, the quality of his work merited the fullest acceptance. He characteristically enough paraded his authorship of the "Exposition," by signing himself at the foot of contributions to *The Monthly Repository* as "The Author of 'The Exposition of the False Medium'"; and his second book, issued in 1834, bore the same designation of authorship under its curious title of "Spirit of Peers and People: a National Tragi-Comedy." This was of a tentative character enough, judged as literature; and it was not till 1837 that Horne put forth work which entitled him to rank as poet and dramatist. To that year belongs "Cosmo de' Medici: an Historical Tragedy," showing great powers of poetic expression, a strong bias toward thought-compelling subjects, a liking for remote and remarkable phases of human passion, and considerable ability in stage-craft. "The Death of Marlowe," a tragedy in one act, published the same year, goes much further towards completeness of tragic conception and perfection of utterance, and will certainly not be readily forgotten. In another matter, that of humour, it

shows a higher taste than "Cosmo" shows—the savage, short strokes with which Jacconot is touched-in being in an elevated style of humour scarcely to be expected from him who had depicted the grotesque pirates of "Cosmo" so short a time before. A new edition of Hazlitt's "Characteristics," with an introduction by Horne, also appeared in 1837; and to the same period belongs a pamphlet called "The Russian Catechism, with Explanatory Notes." A translation of Schlegel's "Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature," by Black, appeared in 1839 with an introduction by Horne; and in 1840 he published his tragedy of "Gregory VII.," with a preliminary "Essay on Tragic Influence," which is among his best critical works. In severity of style and closeness of thought, "Gregory VII." is a great advance on "Cosmo de' Medici"; but, admirable as this ecclesiastical tragedy, as we may call it, is in its management of motive and in the facilities it offers for presentation, its portraiture of Gregory will not stand comparison with the splendid delineation of Dunstan, in Sir Henry Taylor's *Edwin the Fair.* In 1840 Horne was working at the other pole of literature in contributing to a book of rather heavy prose satirical sketches called "Heads of the People." In 1841 he brought out, with the co-operation of others, "The Poems of Geoffry Chaucer Modernized." The introduction and three long poems were done by him; and among his colleagues were Wordsworth, Leigh Hunt, and Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, afterwards the wife of Robert Browning. Another work of 1841 was "The History of Napoleon," in compiling which Horne was greatly assisted by the late Mary Gillies ("Matilda Myrtle").

Official duties connected with the Royal Commission on the Employment of Children occupied much of Horne's time between 1841 and 1843; but in the last-named year he issued the work by which he is best known, and perhaps justly. "Orion, an Epic Poem in Three Books," though not quite properly described in its own sub-title, is a poem of very high mark. True, the ulterior philosophic intentions are not kept so wholly in the background as to leave the action salient and heroic enough for the dignity of epic; and yet there is much narrative dignity in many of the episodes; the blank verse is firmly managed, at times even majestic in movement; and there is much originality in the allegorical treatment of classic fable as a vehicle for modern thought. Above all, "Orion" is not spun out to wearisomeness as most allegories are, but is short, crisp, and compact. Though the book went through six editions in 1843, and has gone through several in later years, it never produced for its author a penny of profit: the first edition was virtually given away by publication at the sarcastic price of one farthing; and the profits on other editions somehow failed to come home to the poet.

Next to "Orion" may be mentioned a powerful dramatic sketch published in *Findens' Tableaux*, and called "The Fetches," which should certainly be preserved among Horne's plays; but a more important work of this period is to be found in the two volumes of critical essays entitled "A New Spirit of the Age" (1844), in which Horne was again helped by Miss Barrett. The sections on Tennyson and Carlyle, indeed, were mainly written on lines indicated by her, and much of those two

sections retains the *ipsissima verba* of the poetess. The composite manuscripts, which are extant, show in great part what each author contributed; but, as Horne had, and exercised, full liberty as to the treatment of his colleague's contributions, there are passages in his hand-writing which are really attributable to her, being mere transpositions or paraphrases of passages occurring in her letters.

In the volume of "Ballad Romances" published in 1846 are strong proofs of the versatility of Horne; and in the same year appeared, without his name, two capital books for children, "The Good-Natured Bear" and "Memoirs of a London Doll." These were followed by "The Life of Van Amburgh the Brute Tamer, by Ephraim Watts," and a curious piece called variously "Murder Heroes," and "Gottlieb Einhalter or the Philanthropic Assassin." A work of more consequence appeared in 1848—to wit, "Judas Iscariot, a Miracle Play," full of vigour and originality—perhaps over-informed with purpose, as was certainly the case with the next two prose works, "The Poor Artist" (1850) and "The Dreamer and the Worker" (1851).

Although in a sense highly successful as a man of letters, Horne was not fortunate from a business point of view; and in 1852, after marrying Miss Catherine St. George Foggo, he left England for the Australian gold-fields. Here again he soon became a marked man, filled several posts of importance, kept up a previously established connexion with Dickens's *Household Words*, and produced a great mass of verse and prose, much of which is still unprinted. His "Australian Facts and Prospects" appeared in 1859; and in 1864 he published

"Prometheus the Fire-bringer," a lyrical drama of high merit. In 1869 he returned to England, and up to the time of his death pursued the calling of letters, issuing several volumes of verse and prose, and making a great number of contributions to periodical literature. Worthy of special mention are the lyrical poems published in 1875 with a revised issue of "Cosmo de' Medici"; a novelette entitled "The Countess Von Labanoff or the Three Lovers" (1877); "Laura Dibalzo or the Patriot Martyrs" (1880), a tragedy which ought to find its way on to the stage; a volume of "Bible Tragedies" (1881), and "Sithron the Star-Stricken" (1883), a merciless criticism of the atrocities of King David, and satire on the tradition of that covenant between Jehovah and Abraham that is still celebrated at the Feast of the Circumcision.

For some years before his death, which took place on the 13th of March 1884, Horne had been in receipt of a Civil List pension in recognition of those high literary merits which had always been more appreciated by leading men of letters than by the general public. That noble poetess and keen critic Mrs. Browning held his powers in high esteem, as did also Robert Browning, Charles Dickens, and many others. But the public seldom sympathize with an artist who lends himself to ulterior purposes, philosophic, ethic, or instructive; and Horne scarcely ever produced work of pure impulse,—that is to say, impulse unassociated with some end outside the region of art pure and simple.

It was a misfortune both for himself and for literature that his circumstances were not such as to take him out of the turmoil of earning his liveli-

hood by the exercise of his really extraordinary talents. His ingenuity and inventiveness, which were almost without limit, were constantly in requisition to produce something marketable. Had he been able to sit apart "out of the hurley-burley" and contemplate his best subjects in a philosophic spirit, concentrating his energies of mind on the production of the best result, we might have had greater work from him. As it is, it may be doubted whether he would not stand better with posterity if he had left, instead of a vast mass of varied and clever literature, only some dozen or so of lyrical poems, "Orion," "Cosmo de' Medici," "The Death of Marlowe," and "Judas Iscariot"; for these are in their own way masterly productions, and strong enough to bear each its burthen of conscious instructiveness.

H. Buxton Forman.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

RICHARD HENRY HORNE.

I.—PELTERS OF PYRAMIDS.

"Nought loves another as itself,
Nor venerates another so;
Nor is it possible to thought
A greater than itself to know."

BLAKE.

A SHOAL of idlers, from a merchant craft
Anchor'd off Alexandria, went ashore,
And mounting asses in their headlong glee,
Round Pompey's Pillar rode with hoots and taunts,—
As men oft say, "What art thou more than we?"
Next in a boat they floated up the Nile,
Singing and drinking, swearing senseless oaths,
Shouting, and laughing most derisively
At all majestic scenes. A bank they reach'd,
And clambering up, play'd gambols among tombs;
And in portentous ruins (through whose depths—
The mighty twilight of departed Gods—
Both sun and moon glanced furtive, as in awe)
They hid, and whoop'd, and spat on sacred things.

At length, beneath the blazing sun they lounged
Near a great Pyramid. Awhile they stood
With stupid stare, until resentment grew,
In the recoil of meanness from the vast;
And gathering stones, they with coarse oaths and jibes,
(As they would say, "What art thou more than we?")
Pelted the Pyramid! But soon those men,
Hot and exhausted, sat them down to drink—
Wrangled, smoked, spat, and laughed, and drowsily
Cursed the bald Pyramid, and fell asleep.

Night came:—a little sand went drifting by—
And morn again was in the soft blue heavens.
The broad slopes of the shining Pyramid
Look'd down in their austere simplicity
Upon the glistening silence of the sands
Whereon no trace of mortal dust was seen.

II.—GENIUS.

(Gulf of Florida.)

FAR out at sea—the sun was high,
While veer'd the wind, and flapp'd the sail—
We saw a snow-white butterfly
Dancing before the fitful gale,
Far out at sea!

The little wanderer, who had lost
His way, of danger nothing knew;
Settled awhile upon the mast,—
Then flutter'd o'er the waters blue,
Far out at sea.

Above, there gleam'd the boundless sky;
Beneath, the boundless ocean sheen;
Between them danced the butterfly,
The spirit-life of this vast scene,—
Far out at sea.

The tiny soul then soar'd away,
Seeking the clouds on fragile wings,
Lured by the brighter, purer ray
Which hope's ecstatic morning brings,
Far out at sea

Away he sped with shimmering glee!
  Scarce seen—now lost—yet onward borne!
Night comes!—with wind and rain—and he
  No more will dance before the Morn,
                Far out at sea.

He dies unlike his mates, I ween;
  Perhaps not sooner, or worse cross'd,—
And he hath felt, thought, known, and seen
  A larger life and hope—though lost
                Far out at sea!

III.—THE PLOUGH.

A Landscape in Berkshire.

ABOVE yon sombre swell of land
  Thou see'st the dawn's grave orange hue,
With one pale streak like yellow sand,
  And over that a vein of blue.

The air is cold above the woods;
  All silent is the earth and sky,
Except with his own lonely moods
  The blackbird holds a colloquy.

Over the broad hill creeps a beam,
  Like hope that gilds a good man's brow,
And now ascends the nostril-stream
  Of stalwart horses come to plough.

Ye rigid Ploughmen, bear in mind—
  Your labour is for future hours!
Advance—spare not—nor look behind—
  Plough deep and straight with all your powers.

IV.—THE LAUREL-SEED.

"MARMORA FINDIT."

I.

A DESPOT gazed on sun-set clouds,
Then sank to sleep amidst the gleam;—
Forthwith, a myriad starving slaves
Must realise his lofty dream.

Year upon year, all night and day,
They toil'd, they died—and were replaced;
At length, a marble fabric rose
With cloud-like domes and turrets graced.

No anguish of those herds of slaves,
E'er shook one dome or wall asunder,
Nor wars of other mighty Kings,
Nor lustrous javelins of the thunder.

II.

One sunny morn a lonely bird,
Pass'd o'er, and dropt a laurel-seed;
The plant sprang up amidst the walls
Whose chinks were full of moss and weed.

The laurel tree grew large and strong,
Its roots went searching deeply down;
It split the marble walls of Wrong,
And blossom'd o'er the Despot's crown.

And in its boughs a nightingale
Sings to those world-forgotten graves;
And o'er its head a skylark's voice
Consoles the spirits of the slaves.

ORION.

RICHARD HENRY HORNE.

I.

ORION AND ARTEMIS.

(FROM BOOK I., CANTO II.)

Canto I. narrates how Orion, "the builder up of things,' a young giant, meets Artemis a goddess, with her "buskined nymphs," while hunting in the woods. The goddess at first resents Orion's intrusion upon her sports, but impressed by his nobility of form, and hearing his story pardons him, adds him to her train, and proceeds to educate him. Her beauty and kindness inspire his love which she coldly reciprocates.

ONE day, at noontide, when the chase was done,
Which with unresting speed since dawn had held,
The woods were all with golden fires alive,
And heavy limbs tingled with glowing heat.
Sylvans and Fauns at full length cast them down,
And cooled their flame-red faces in the grass,
Or o'er a streamlet bent, and dipped their heads
Deep as the top hair of their pointed ears;
While Nymphs and Oceanides retired
To grots and sacred groves, with loitering steps,
And bosoms swelled and throbbing, like a bird's
Held between human hands. The hounds with tongues,
Crimson, and lolling hot upon the green,
And outstretched noses, flatly crouched; their skins
Clouded or spotted, like the field-bean's flower,
Or tiger-lily, painted the wide lawns.

Orion wandered deep into a vale
Alone; from all the rest his steps he bent,
Thoughtful, yet with no object in his mind;
Languid, yet restless. Near a hazel copse,
Whose ripe nuts hung in clusters twined with grapes,
He paused, down gazing, 'till upon his sense
A fragrance stole, as of ambrosia wafted
Through the warm shades by some divinity
Amid the woods. With gradual step he moved
Onward, and soon the poppied entrance found
Of a secluded bower. He entered straight,
Unconsciously attracted, and beheld
His Goddess love, who slept—her robe cast off,
Her sandals, bow and quiver, thrown aside,
Yet with her hair still braided, and her brow
Decked with her crescent light. Awed and alarmed
By loving reverence—which dreads offence
E'en though the wrong were never known, and feels
Its heart's religion for religion's self,
Besides its object's claim—swift he retired.

The entrance gain'd, what thoughts, what visions his!
What danger had he 'scaped, what innocent crime,
Which Artemis might yet have felt so deep!
He blest the God of Sleep who thus had held
Her senses! Yet, what loveliness had glanced
Before his mind—scarce seen! Might it not be
Illusion?—some bright shadow of a hope
First dawning? Would not sleep's God still exert
Safe influence, if he once more stole back
And gazed an instant? 'Twere not well to do,
And would o'erstrain with doubt the accident
Which first had led him there. He dare not risk
The chance 't were not illusion——oh, if true!

While thus he murmured hesitating, slow,
As slow and hesitating he returned
Instinctively, and on the Goddess gazed!

With adoration and delicious fear,
Lingering he stood; then pace by pace retired,
'Till in the hazel copse sighing he paused,
And with most earnest face and vacant eye,
And brow perplexed, stared at a tree. His hands
Were clenched; his feet pressed down the soil,
And changed their place. Suddenly he turned round
And made his way direct into the bower.

There was a slumb'rous silence in the air,
By noon-tide's sultry murmurs from without
Made more oblivious. Not a pipe was heard
From field or wood; but the grave beetle's drone
Passed near the entrance: once the cuckoo called
O'er distant meads, and once a horn began
Melodious plaint, then died away. A sound
Of murmurous music yet was in the breeze,
For silver gnats that harp on glassy strings,
And rise and fall in sparkling clouds, sustained
Their dizzy dances o'er the seething meads.
With brain as dizzy stood Orion now
I' the quivering bower. There rapturous he beheld
As in a trance, not conscious of himself
The perfect sculpture of that naked form,
Whose Parian whiteness and clear outline gleamed
In its own hue, nor from the foliage took
One tint, nor from his ample frame one shade.
Her lovely hair hung drooping, half unbound,—
Fair silken braids, fawn-tinted delicately,
That on one shoulder lodged their opening coil.

Her large round arms of dazzling beauty lay
In matchless symmetry and inviolate grace
Along the mossy floor. At length he dropped
Softly upon his knees, his clasped hands raised
Above his head, 'till by resistless impulse
His arms descending, were expanded wide——
Swift as a flash, erect the Goddess rose!

Her eyes shot through Orion, and he felt
Within his breast an icy dart. Confronted,
Mutely they stood, but all the bower was filled
With rising mist that chilled him to the bone,
Colder, as more obscure the space became;
And ere the last collected shape he saw
Of Artemis, dispersing fast amid
Dense vapoury clouds, the aching wintriness
Had risen to his teeth, and fixed his eyes,
Like glistening stones in the congealing air.

II.

THE GIANTS' ORGIE.

(FROM BOOK I., CANTO III.)

Repelled by the coldness of the love of Artemis, and bewildered by the problems that perplex his mind, Orion relapses into his old life among the giants.

Away disconsolate the giant went,
Now clambering forest slopes, now hurrying down
Precipitous brakes, tearing the berried boughs
For food, scarce tasted, and oft gathering husks,
Or wind-eggs of strange birds dropt in the fens,
To toss them in some rapid brook, and watch
Their wavering flight. But now a tingling sound
Wakes his dull ear!—a distant rising drone

Upon the air, as of a wintry wind—
And dry leaves rustle like a coming rain.
The wind is here; and, following soon, descends
A tempest, which relieves its rage in tears.
Kneeling he stooped, and drank the hissing flood,
And wished the Ogygian deluge were returned;
Then sat in very wilfulness beside
The banks while they o'erflowed, till starting up,
Bounding he sought his early giant friends.

Them, in their pastoral yet half-savage haunts
Found, as of yore, he with brief speech addressed,
And bade them to an orgie on the plain,
By rocks and forests amphitheatred.
Such greeting high they with a gleeful roar
Received, and forthwith rose to follow him,
Save Akinetos, who seemed not to hear,
But looked more grave still seated on a stone,
While they betook them to the plains below.

Thither at once they sped, and on the way
Rhexergon tore down boughs, while Harplax slew
Oxen and deer, more than was need; and soon
On the green space Orion built the pile
With cross logs, underwood, dry turf and ferns,
And cast upon it fat of kine, and heaps
Of crisp dry leaves; and fired the pile, and beat
A hollow shield, and called the Bacchic train,
Who brought their skins of wine, and loaded poles
That bent with mighty clusters of black grapes
Slung midway. In the blaze Orion threw
Choice gums, and oil, that with explosion bright
Of broad and lucid flame alarmed the sky,
And fragrant spice, then set the Fauns to dance,

While whirled the timbrels, and the reed-pipes blew
A full-toned melody of mad delight.
Down came the Mænads from the sun-brown hills,
Down flocked the laughing Nymphs of groves and brooks;
With whom came Opis, singing to a lyre,
And Sida, ivory-limbed and crowned with flowers.
High swelled the orgie; and the roasting bulk
Of bull and deer was scarce distinguishable
'Mid the loud-crackling boughs that sprawled in flame
Now richest odours rose, and filled the air—
Made glittering with the cymbals spun on high
Through jets of nectar upward cast in sport,
And raging with songs and laughter and wild cries!

In the first pause for breath and deeper draughts,
A Faun who on a quiet green knoll sat—
Somewhat apart—sang a melodious ode,
Made rich by harmonies of hidden strings,
Unto bright Meropé the island's pride,
And daughter of the king; whereto a quire
Gave chorus, and her loveliness rehearsing,
Wished that Orion shared with her the throne.

The wine ran wastefully, and o'er the ears
Of the tall jars that stood too near the fire,
Bubbled and leapt, and streamed in crimsoning foam,
Hot as the hissing sap of the green logs.
But none took heed of that, nor anything.
Thus song and feast, dance, and wild revelry,
Succeeded; now in turn, now all at once
Mingling tempestuously. In a blind whirl
Around the fire Biastor dragged a rout
In osier bands and garlands; Harplax fiercely
The violet scarfs and autumn-tinted robes
From Nymph and Mænad tore; and by the hoofs

Hormetes seized a Satyr, with intent,
Despite his writhing freaks and furious face,
To dash him on a gong, but that amidst
The struggling mass Encolyon thrust a pine,
Heavy and black as Charon's ferrying pole,
O'er which they, like a bursting billow, fell.

At length when night came folding round the scene,
And golden lights grew red and terrible,
Flashed torch and spear, while reed-pipes deeper blew
Sonorous dirgings and melodious storm,
And timbrels groaned and jangled to the tones
Of high-sustaining horns,—then round the blaze,
Their shadows brandishing afar and athwart
Over the level space and up the hills,
Six giants held portentous dance, nor ceased
Till one by one in bare Bacchante arms,
Brim-full of nectar, helplessly they rolled
Deep down oblivion. Sleep absorbed their souls.

III.

AKINETOS AND ORION.

(FROM BOOK III., CANTO I.)

Orion having been promised the hand of Meropé, daughter of Oinopion King of Chios, upon the accomplishment of a certain task, executes it and claims the reward of his labour. The King refuses to fulfil his promise, whereupon Orion with the help of the other giants carries her off by force. He is however tracked by the emissaries of the King, who pour poison into his eyes during sleep, and thus destroy his sight. Orion gropes his way to the cave of Akinetos and tells his story.

THERE is an age of action in the world;
An age of thought; lastly, an age of both,
When thought guides action and men know themselves

What they would have, and how to compass it.
Yet are not these great periods so distinct
Each from the other,—or from all the rest
Of intermediate degrees and powers,
Cut off,—but that strong links of nature run
Throughout, and prove one central heart, wherein
Time beats twin-pulses with Humanity.
In every age an emblem and a type,
Premature, single, ending with itself,
Of loftier being in an after-time,
May germinate, develop, radiate,
And like a star go out, and leave no mark
Save a high memory. One such is our theme.

The wisdom of mankind creeps slowly on,
Subject to every doubt that can retard,
Or fling it back upon an earlier time;
So timid are man's footsteps in the dark,
But blindest those who have no inward light.
One mind, perchance, in every age contains
The sum of all before, and much to come;
Much that's far distant still; but that full mind
Companioned oft by others of like scope,
Belief, and tendency, and anxious will,
A circle small transpierces and illumes:
Expanding, soon its subtle radiance
Falls blunted from the mass of flesh and bone.
The man who for his race might supersede
The work of ages, dies worn out—not used,
And in his track disciples onward strive,
Some hairs'-breadths only from his starting point:
Yet lives he not in vain; for if his soul
Hath entered others, though imperfectly,
The circle widens as the world spins round,--

His soul works on while he sleeps 'neath the grass.
So, let the firm Philosopher renew
His wasted lamp—the lamp wastes not in vain,
Though he no mirrors for its rays may see,
Nor trace them through the darkness;—let the Hand
Which feels primeval impulses, direct
A forthright plough, and make his furrow broad,
With heart untiring while one field remains;
So, let the herald Poet shed his thoughts,
Like seeds that seem but lost upon the wind.
Work in the night, thou sage, while Mammon's brain
Teems with low visions on his couch of down;—
Break, thou, the clods while high-throned Vanity,
Midst glaring lights and trumpets, holds its court;—
Sing, thou, thy song amidst the stoning crowd,
Then stand apart, obscure to man, with God.
The poet of the future knows his place,
Though in the present shady be his seat,
And all his laurels deepening but the shade.

But what is yonder vague and uncouth shape,
That like a burthened giant bending moves,
With outspread arms groping its upward way
Along a misty hill? In the blear shades,
Sad twilight, and thick dews darkening the paths
Whereon the slow dawn hath not yet advanced
A chilly foot, nor tinged the colourless air—
The labouring figure fades as it ascends.

'Twas he, the giant builder-up of things,
And of himself, now blind; the worker great,
Who sees no more the substance near his hands,
Nor in them, nor the objects that his mind
Desires and would embody. All is dark.

It is Orion now bereft of sight,
Whose eyes aspired to luminous designs.
The sun and moon and stars are blotted out,
With their familiar glories, which become
Henceforth like chronicles remote. . . .

In that dark hour when anguished he awoke,
Orion from the sea-shore made his way,
Feeling from cliff to cliff, from tree to tree,
Guided by knowledge of the varied tracts
Of land,—the rocks, the mounds of fern, the grass,
That 'neath his feet made known each spot he passed,
Hill, vale and woodland; till he reached the caves,
Once his rude happy dwelling. All was silent.
Rhexergon and Biastor were abroad,
Searching the jasper quarries for a lynx
That had escaped the wreck. Deeply he sighed.
The quiet freshness came upon his heart,
Not sweetly, but with aching sense of loss.
He felt his way, and listened at the cave
Of Akinetos, whom he heard within
Sing to himself. And Akinetos rose,
Perceiving he was blind—and with slow care
Rolled forth a stone, and placed him by his side.

Orion's tale soon closed; its outward acts
And sad results, were all that he could speak:
The rest writhed inwardly, and—like the leads
That sink the nets and all the struggles hide,
Till a strong hand drags forth the prize,—his words
Kept down the torment, uttered all within
In hurrying anguish. Yet the clear, cold eye,
Grey, deep-set, steady, of the Great Unmoved,
Saw much of this beneath, and thus he spake.

"My son, why wouldst thou ever work and build
And so bestir thyself, when certain grief,
Mischief, or error, and not seldom death,
Follows on all that individual will
Can of itself attain. I told thee this;
Nor for reproach repeat it, but to soothe
Thy mind with consciousness that not in thee
Was failure born. Its law preceded thine:
It governs every act, which needs must fail—
I mean, give place—to make room for the next.
Each thinks he fails, because he thinks himself
A chain and centre, not a link that runs
In large and complex circles, all unknown.
Sit still. Remain with me. No difference
Will in the world be found: 'twill know no change,
Be sure. Say that an act hath been ordained?
Some hand must do it: therefore do not move:
An instrument of action must be found,
And you escape both toil and consequence,
Which run their rounds with restless fools; for ever
One act leads to another, and disturbs
Man's rest, and Reason—which foresees *no* end."

"I feel that thou art wise," Orion said;
"The worker ever comes to thee cast down!
Who with alacrity would frame, toil, build,
If he had wisdom in results, like thee?
Would Strength life's soil upheave, though close it clung,
And heavy, like a spade that digs in clay,
Therein to plant roots certain not to grow?
Oh miserable man! Oh fool of hope!
All I have done has wrought me no fixt good,
But grief more bitter as the bliss was sweet,

Because so fleeting. Why did Artemis
Me from my rough and useful life withdraw ?
O'er wood and iron I had mastery,
And hunted shadows knowing they were shades.
Since then, my intellect she filled, and taught me
To hunt for lasting truth in the pale moon.
Such proved my love for her ; and such hath proved
My love for Meropé, to me now lost.
I will remain here : I will build no more."

He paused ; but Akinetos was asleep.
Wherefore Orion at his feet sank down,
Tired of himself, of grief, and all the world,
And also slept. Ere dawn he had a dream :
'Twas hopeful, lovely, though of no clear sense
He said " Methinks it must betoken good ;
Some help from Artemis, who may relent,
And think of me as one she sought to lift
To her own sphere of purity ; or, indeed,
Some God may deem me worthy of a fate
Better than that which locks up all design
In pausing night. Perchance, the dream may bode
That Meropé shall be to me restored,
And I see nature through her death-deep eyes,
And know the glorious mysteries of the grave,
Which through extremes of blissful passion's life
Methought I saw. Oh wherefore am I blind ?"

" Abandon all such hopes of Meropé,"
Murmur'd the Great Unmoved : "her truth was strong,
First to herself, and through herself to thee,
While that it lasted ; but that's done and gone.
How should she love a giant who is blind,

And sees no beauty but the secret heart
Panting in darkness? That is not her world."
Orion rose erect. "She is not false—
Although she may forget. I will go forth:
I may find aid, or cause some help to come
That shall restore my sight." The sage replied,
"Thou'st seen enough already, and too much
For happiness. This passion prematurely
Endeth; and therefore endeth as seems best,
'Ere it wear out itself with languor and pain,
Or prostrate all thy mind to its small use—
Far worse, methinks." "Hast thou," Orion cried,
"No impulses—desires—no promptings kind?"
The sage his memory tasked; then slow replied:
"Once I gave water to a thirsty plant:
'Twas a weak moment with us both. Next morn
It craved the like—but I, for 'Nature' calling,
Passed on. It drooped—then died, and rotted soon,
And living things, more highly organized,
With quick eyes and fine horns, reproached my hand
Which had delayed their birth. What wrong we do
By interfering with life's balanced plan!
Do nothing—wait—and all that might have come
Seeds the earth's winds—and all that must come, comes.
Some men will starve, by Nature's common law—
Like crops that rot while waiting for the rain—
And many die from too much meat and drink,
But the stars teach us ne'er to move alone."
Silent awhile they stood. Orion sighed,
"I know thy words are wise—" and went his way.

IV.

ORION AND EOS.

(FROM BOOK III., CANTO II.)

Orion, sightless and despondent, wanders to and fro until

> At length, one day, some shepherd as he passed,
> With voice that mingled with the bleat of lambs,
> Cried, "Seek the source of light!—begin anew."

Inspired by the thought, he prevails upon Brontes, a cyclops, to ascend his shoulders and guide his course eastward, to meet the rising morn, and prays to Eos, goddess of the morning, to restore his sight.

> His prayer paused tremulous! O'er his brow he felt
> A balmy beam, that with its warmth conveyed
> Divine suffusion and deep sense of peace
> Throughout his being; and amidst a pile,
> Far in the distance, gleaming like the bloom
> Of almond-trees seen through long floating halls
> Of pale ethereal blue and virgin gold,
> A Goddess, smiling like a new-blown flower,
> Orion saw! And as he gazed he wept.

LEVEL with the summit of that eastern mount,
By slow approach, and like a promontory
Which seems to glide and meet a coming ship,
The pale-gold platform of the Morning came
Towards the gliding mount. Against a sky
Of delicate purple, snow-bright courts and halls,
Touched with light silvery green, gleaming across,
Fronted by pillars vast, cloud-capitalled,
With shafts of changeful pearl, all reared upon
An isle of clear aerial gold, came floating;
And in the centre, clad in fleecy white,

With lucid lilies in her golden hair,
Eos, sweet Goddess of the Morning, stood.

From the bright peak of that surrounded mount,
One step sufficed to gain the tremulous floor,
Whereon the Palace of the Morning shone,
Scarcely a bow-shot distant; but that step,
Orion's humbled and still mortal feet
Dared not adventure. In the Goddess' face
Imploringly he gazed. "Advance!" she said,
In tones more sweet than when some heavenly bird,
Hid in a rosy cloud, its morning hymn
Warbles unseen, wet with delicious dews,
And to earth's flowers, all looking up in prayer,
Tells of the coming bliss. "Believe—advance!—
Or, as the spheres move onward with their song
That calls me to awaken other lands,
That moment will escape which ne'er returns."
Forward Orion stepped: the platform bright
Shook, like the reflex of a star in water
Moved by the breeze, throughout its whole expanse;
And e'en the palace glistened fitfully,
As with electric shiver it sent forth
Odours of flowers divine and all fresh life.
Still stood he where he stepped, nor to return
Attempted. To essay one pace beyond,
He felt no power—yet onward he advanced
Safe to the Goddess, who, with hand outstretched,
Into the palace led him. Grace and strength,
With sense of happy change to finer earth,
Freshness of nature, and belief in good,
Came flowing o'er his soul, and he was blest.

'Tis always morning somewhere in the world,
And Eos rises, circling constantly

The varied regions of mankind. No pause
Of renovation and of freshening rays
She knows, but evermore her love breathes forth
On field and forest, as on human hope,
Health, beauty, power, thought, action and advance.
All this Orion witnessed, and rejoiced.
The turmoil he had known, the late distress
By loss of passion's object, and of sight,
Were now exchanged for these serene delights
Of contemplation, as the influence
That Eos wrought around for ever, dawned
Upon his vision and his inmost heart,
In sweetness and success. All sympathy
With all fair things that in her circle lay,
She gave, and all received; nor knew of strife;
For from the sun her cheek its bloom withdrew,
And, ere intolerant noon, the floating realm
Of Eos—queen of the awakening earth—
Was brightening other lands, wherefrom black Night
Her faded chariot down the sky had driven
Behind the sea. Thus from the earth upraised,
And over its tumultuous breast sustained
In peace and tranquil glory—oh blest state!—
Clear-browed Orion, full of thankfulness,
And pure devotion to the Goddess, dwelt
Within the glowing Palace of the Morn.

But these serene airs did not therefore bring
A death-sleep o'er the hours of memory,
Where all its clouds and colours, specks of sails,
Its car-borne Gods, shipwrecks, and drowning men
Passed full in view; yet with a mellowing sense
Ideal, and from pain sublimed. Thus came
Mirrors of nature to him. and full oft

Downward on Chios turned his happy eyes,
With grateful thoughts that o'er life's sorrows wove
The present texture of a sweet content,
Passing all wisdom, or its rarest flower.
He saw the woods, and blessed them for the sake
Of Artemis; the city, and rich gloom
That o'er the cedar forest ever hung,
He also blessed for Meropé; the isle,
And all that dwelt there, he with smiles beheld,—
Nor, it may be, without prophetic thrill
When on Mount Epos turned his parting glance.
There, in an after age, close at its foot,
In the tone level was a basin broad
Scooped out, and central on a low shaft sat
A sage with silver hair, and taught his school,
Where the boy Homer on the stony rim
Sat with the rest around. Bright were his eyes.

With re-awakened love, and sight enlarged
For all things beautiful, and nobly true
To the great elements that rule the world,
Orion's mind, left to itself, reviewed
Past knowledge, and of wisdom saw the fruit
Far nearer than before, the path less rough,
The true possession not austere and cold,
But natural in its strength and balance just
Of body and of soul; each to respect,
And to the other minister, and both
Their one harmonious being to employ
For general happiness, and for their own.
Such was the lore which now his thoughts attained,
And he to Eos humbly would display,
Beseeching her response! She only gazed
With a benignant smile upon the earth

That rolled beneath, and rendered back the gleam
With tender radiance over many a field.

The story of his life Orion told—
His youth—his labours—lastly of his loves;
Nor what for Artemis his opening soul
Had felt—what deep desire for Meropé—
Sought to conceal. How much his intellect,
And entire nature, owed to the pale Queen
Of night's illumined vault, with grateful sighs
Of reverential memory he declared;
To Eos turning with a pleading look,
Lest she might not approve. She took his hand,
And placed it on her side beneath her heart,
Which beat a sphery music audibly.
He, listening, still enraptured, countless echoes,
Rang sweetly faint from distant groves beneath
Upon the earth. Within his hurrying heart
The trembling echoes now Orion felt,
And silent stood as one who apprehends
Some new and blissful hope that round him soars,
Which still eludes his vision and his mind.

"What have I done on earth?" Orion said,
While pensive on the platform of the morn
He stood. "My youth's companions are destroyed,
And Akinetos evermore seems right,
Predicting failure to our human acts:
Or good, or ill, alike untoward prove.
I have not well directed mine own strength,
Nor theirs." As thus he mused, a skylark sang
Within the gleaming Palace, and a voice
Followed melodious as it spake these words.

"Well hast thou striven, and due reward shalt find

For though reward held dalliance with thy hopes
Of former days, and for thyself thou wrought'st,
The suffering and the lesson have sufficed
To fit thee for more noble aims. Sigh not
That those companions of thine unformed youth
Their rude career have closed: evil was all
They could have done without thee. Thou hast won
The love of Eos; doubt not of her truth,
And to thyself be constant, as to her."

He turned, and at his side the Goddess smiled,
With tenderness of grace, such as the soul
Can through the heart convey, where both accord
One object to exalt. Orion knelt,
And looked up in her face, then rose and clasped
Her yielding loveliness. As they retired
An eye glanced fire-like through the clear blue air,
And saw the embrace!—and marked the glowing beams
On Eos' bosom, rosy yet all gold,
Like ripened peaches in the morning light.
That eye grew deadly—flashed—and it was gone,
As onward in its course the Palace moved.
'Twas Artemis!

V.

THE DEATH OF AKINETOS.

(FROM BOOK III., CANTO III.)

'Twas eve, and Time his vigorous course pursuing,
Met Akinetos walking by the sea.
At sight of him the Father of the Hours
Paused on the sand,—which shrank, grew moist, and trembled
At that unwonted pressure of the God.
And thus with look and accent stern, he spake.

"Thou art the mortal who, with hand unmoved,
Eatest the fruit of others' toil; whose heart
Is but a vital engine that conveys
Blood, to no purpose, up and down thy frame;
Whose forehead is a large stone sepulchre
Of knowledge! and whose life but turns to waste
My measured hours, and earth's material mass!"

Whereto the Great Unmoved no answer made,—
And Time continued, sterner than before:
"Thy sire, Tithonos, living nine score years,
Knew many things; but when thou wert begot,
Olympos chimed with crystal laughter bright,
Since, for thy mother, his dim vision chose
A fallen statue which he deemed a nymph,
White as a flint amid a field of corn.
I warn thee by that memory!—thou mistakest
A prostrate stone for the fair truth of life."

Whereto the Great Unmoved no answer made,—
And Time continued, sterner than before:
"O, not-to-be-approved! thou Apathy,
Who gazest downward on that empty shell,—
Is it for thee who bear'st the common lot
Of man, and art his brother in the fields,
From birth to funeral pyre; is it for thee,
Who didst derive from thy long-living sire
More knowledge than endows far better sons,—
Thy lamp to burn within, and turn aside
Thy face from all humanity, or behold it
Without emotion, like some sea-shelled thing
Staring round from a green hollowed rock,
Not aiding, loving, caring—hoping aught—
Forgetting Nature, and by her forgot?"

Whereto, with mildness, Akinetos said,
"Hast thou considered of Eternity?"
"Profoundly have I done so in my youth;"
Chronos replied, and bowed his furrowed head;
"Most, when my tender feet from Chaos trod
Stumbling,—and, doubtful of mine eyes, my hands
The dazzling air explored. But, since that date,
So many ages have I told; so many,
Fleet after fleet on newly opening seas,
Descry before me, that of late my thoughts
Have rather dwelt on all around my path,
With anxious care. Well were it thus with thee."

Then Akinetos calmly spake once more,
With eyes still bent upon the tide-ribbed sands:
"And dost thou of To-morrow also think?"
Whereat—as one dismayed by sudden thought
Of many crowding things that call him thence,—
Time, with bent brows, went hurrying on his way.

Slow tow'rds his cave the Great Unmoved repaired,
And, with his back against the rock, sat down
Outside, half smiling in the pleasant air;
And in the lonely silence of the place
He thus, at length, discoursed unto himself:

"Orion, ever active and at work,
Honest and skilful, not to be surpassed,
Brought misery on himself and those he loved;
Caused his companions' death,—and now hath found
At Artemis' hand, his own. So fares it ever
With the world's builder. He, from wall to beam,
From pillar to roof, from shade to corporal form;
From the first vague Thought to the Temple vast,
A ceaseless contest with the crowd endures,

For whom he labours. Why then should we move?
Our wisdom cannot change whate'er's decreed,
Nor e'en the acts or thoughts of brainless men:
Why then be moved? Best reason is most vain.
He who will do and suffer, must—and end.
Hence, death is not an evil, since it leads
To somewhat permanent, beyond the noise
Man maketh on the tabor of his will,
Until the small round burst, and pale he falls.
His ear is stuffed with the grave's earth, yet feels
The inaudible whispers of Eternity,
While Time runs shouting to Oblivion
In the upper fields. I would not swell that cry.

Thus Akinetos sat from day to day,
Absorbed in indolent sublimity,
Reviewing thoughts and knowledge o'er and o'er;
And now he spake, now sang unto himself,
Now sank to brooding silence. From above,
While passing, Time the rock touched!—and it oozed
Petrific drops—gently at first—and slow.
Reclining lonely in his fixt repose,
The Great Unmoved unconsciously became
Attached to that he pressed,—and gradually—
While his thoughts drifted to no shore—a part
O' the rock. There clung the dead excrescence, till
Strong hands, descended from Orion, made
Large roads, built markets, granaries and steep walls,—
Squaring down rocks for use, and common good.

Thomas Lovell Beddoes.

1803—1849.

Thomas Lovell Beddoes, the son of the famous physician Thomas Beddoes, and the grandson of Richard Edgeworth, was born at Clifton, on July 20th, 1803. He was educated at Charter House School, and Pembroke College, Oxford; but his youth was chiefly devoted to the study of the Elizabethan drama, especially in the works of Webster and Tourneur, who, had he possessed a more eminent faculty for dramatic construction, might have seemed to revive in him. Unfortunately for his poetical fame, he adopted the medical profession, and pursued his studies in Germany. Scientific pursuits and disuse of his mother tongue combined to extinguish his pleasure in, and his capacity for poetry, and he only completed one play, "Death's Jest Book," published after his death with two unfinished plays and other fragments, chiefly dramatic. He led for many years an unsettled life in Germany and Switzerland, long an ardent physiological student, and actively concerned on the Liberal side of politics; but by degrees his interest in life waned away, and he died by his own hand in 1849. His "Bride's Tragedy," an immature work, had been published in his lifetime, but his fame rests upon "Death's Jest Book," first published in 1850, and the volume of poems and dramatic fragments, accompanied by

his friend Kelsall's admirable memoir and his own marvellously vivid letters, which succeeded it in the following year.

Beddoes has been described as a Gothic Keats, and the description is an apt one. It expresses not merely the special fascination which Gothic subjects exerted upon his mind, comparable to the rapture with which Keats was inspired by the Hellenic mythology, but the concrete method of treatment characteristic of both poets. Both give us things rather than thoughts, or rather make their thoughts visible and almost tangible by the medium of things. Their lines are crowded with material objects and deal directly with the object itself, rather than its qualities or attributes. This peculiarity is especially remarkable in Beddoes, who, communing so much with the spectral and supernatural, is nevertheless one of the most objective and substantial of poets. In all strictly poetical endowments he is most affluent, it is only when he of necessity forsakes the realm of pure poetry that he becomes awkward and ineffectual. He had chosen the drama for his special field—unwisely it might have been said, had his overmastering enthusiasm for the Elizabethan stage allowed him any alternative. The dramatist cannot always dwell in what Beddoes would have called translunar regions: he needs the sublunary endowment of logic, alike in the development of plot and of character. This was denied to Beddoes, and hence his failure as a dramatist is as signal as his success as a poet. He is, however, much more than a writer of exquisite fragments, for his beauties, isolated and disjointed in themselves, are yet inspired with a continuity of feeling,

and taken altogether, and especially when read in connection with his letters, form a kind of autobiographic poem, a comment on a character of striking originality and interest. The physiologist and psychologist may learn much from the only English poet whose mind has been deeply tinged by a medical training: but he is especially a poet for poets, for readers who can prize the massy ore of poetry, even when it has failed to receive the stamp of artistic finish. Pure ore it is at least: after Shelley and Keats no poet is freer from admixture with inferior matter. Things invariably present themselves to him under their most picturesque and imaginative aspects, and it would be hard to bring him in guilty of a single commonplace. As a lyrical writer he is curiously unequal; some of his pieces are formless and tuneless; while others have placed him among the best lyrists in the language.

The creeping palsy which, in the guise of a lofty ideal and scorn of his and others' failure to attain it, came over him and eventually withered up the nerve of poetic impulse and energy, cannot be so well set forth as by himself in one of many passages of like purport, which will also serve to exemplify the picturesqueness and condensation of his prose style:—

"All about the play annoys me, because I have utterly neglected it, and feel not the least inclination to take any further trouble in the matter. This indifference is of itself almost enough to convince me that my nature is not that of one who is destined to achieve anything very important in this department of literature; another is a sort of very moderate, somewhat contemptuous, respect for the profession of a mere poet in our inky age. In the third place,

a man must have an exclusive passion for his art, and all the obstinacy and self-denial which is combined with such a temperament, an unconquerable and always enduring will; always working forward towards the only goal he knows—(such a man must never think that there is any human employment so good, much less suspect that there may be not a few better),—ambition, industry, and all those impolitic and hasty virtues which helped Icarus to buckle on his plumes, and which we have left sticking in the pages of 'Don Quixote.' . . . It is good to be tolerable, or intolerable, in any other line, but Apollo defend us from brewing all our lives at a quintessential pot of the smallest ale Parnassian." What a misfortune it is to be born in an introspective age! Had Beddoes been an Elizabethan, he would have been vexed by no such idle misgivings, but, producing much good, much bad, and much indifferent work, would have proved a richer quarry than even Webster or Ford to a Charles Lamb or an Arthur Bullen.

RICHARD GARNETT.

DEATH'S JEST BOOK; OR, THE FOOL'S TRAGEDY.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES.

I.

SONG FROM THE SHIP.

(FROM ACT I., SCENE I.)

TO sea, to sea! The calm is o'er;
The wanton water leaps in sport,
And rattles down the pebbly shore;
The dolphin wheels, the sea-cows snort,
And unseen Mermaids' pearly song
Comes bubbling up, the weeds among.
Fling broad the sail, dip deep the oar:
To sea, to sea! the calm is o'er.

To sea, to sea! our wide-winged bark
Shall billowy cleave its sunny way,
And with its shadow, fleet and dark,
Break the caved Triton's azure day,
Like mighty eagle soaring light
O'er antelopes on Alpine height.
The anchor heaves, the ship swings free,
The sails swell full. To sea, to sea!

II.

DIRGE FOR WALFRAM.

(FROM ACT II., SCENE I.)

IF thou wilt ease thine heart
Of love and all its smart,
Then sleep, dear, sleep;

And not a sorrow
Hang any tear on your eyelashes;
Lie still and deep,
Sad soul, until the sea-wave washes
The rim o' the sun to-morrow,
In eastern sky.

But wilt thou cure thine heart
Of love and all its smart,
Then die, dear, die;
'Tis deeper, sweeter,
Than on a rose-bank to lie dreaming
With folded eye;
And there alone, amid the beaming
Of love's stars, thou'lt meet her
In eastern sky.

III.

ISBRAND AND SIEGFRIED.

(FROM ACT II., SCENE III.)

SCENE.—*A retired gallery in the ducal castle.*

Isbr. Now see you how this dragon egg of ours
Swells with its ripening plot? Methinks I hear
Snaky rebellion turning restless in it,
And with its horny jaws scraping away
The shell that hides it. All is ready now:
I hold the latch-string of a new world's wicket;
One pull and it rolls in. Bid all our friends
Meet at that ruinous church-yard once again,
By moon rise: until then I'll hide myself;
For these sweet thoughts rise dimpling to my lips,
And break the dark stagnation of my features,
Like sugar melting in a glass of poison.
To-morrow, Siegfried, shalt thou see me sitting
One of the drivers of this racing earth,

With Grüssau's reins between my fingers. Ha!
Never since Hell laughed at the church, blood-drunken
From rack and wheel, has there been joy so mad
As that which stings my marrow now.
Siegfr. Good cause,
The sun-glance of a coming crown to heat you,
And give your thoughts gay colours in the steam
Of a fermenting brain.
Isbr. Not alone that.
A sceptic is smooth handling, it is true,
And one grows fat and jolly in a chair
That has a kingdom crouching under it,
With one's name on its collar, like a dog,
To fetch and carry. But the heart I have
Is a strange little snake. He drinks not wine,
When he'd be drunk, but poison: he doth fatten
On bitter hate, not love. And, O that duke!
My life is hate of him; and, when I tread
His neck into the grave, I shall, methinks,
Fall into ashes with the mighty joy,
Or be transformed into a wingèd star;
That will be all eternal heaven distilled
Down to one thick rich minute. This sounds madly,
But I am mad when I remember him:
Siegfried, you know not why.
Siegfr. I never knew
That you had quarrelled.
Isbr. True: but did you see
My brother's corpse? There was a wound on't, Siegfried;
He died not gently, nor in a ripe age;
And I'll be sworn it was the duke that did it,
Else he had not remained in that far land,

And sent his knights to us again.
Siegfr. I thought
He was the duke's close friend.
Isbr. Close as his blood:
A double-bodied soul they did appear,
Rather than fellow hearts.
Siegfr. I've heard it told
That they did swear and write in their best blood,
And her's they loved the most, that who died first
Should, on death's holidays, revisit him
Who still dwelt in the flesh.
Isbr. O that such bond
Would move the jailor of the grave to open
Life's gate again unto my buried brother,
But half an hour! Were I buried, like him,
There in the very garrets of death's town,
But six feet under earth, (that's the grave's sky,)
I'd jump up into life. But he's a quiet ghost;
He walks not in the churchyard after dew,
But gets to his grave betimes, burning no glow-worms,
Sees that his bones are right, and stints his worms
Most miserly. If you were murdered, Siegfried,
As he was by this duke, should it be so?
Siegfr. Here speaks again your passion: what know we
Of death's commandments to his subject-spirits,
Who are as yet the body's citizens?
What seas unnavigable, what wild forests,
What castles, and what ramparts there may hedge
His icy frontier?
Isbr. Tower and roll what may,
There have been goblins bold who have stolen passports,
Or sailed the sea, or leaped the wall, or flung
The drawbridge down, and travelled back again.
So would my soul have done. But let it be.

IV.

THE DUKE'S SOLILOQUY.

(FROM ACT III., SCENE III.)

Duke. DECEIVED and disappointed, vain desires!
Why laugh I not, and ridicule myself?
'Tis still, and cold, and nothing in the air
But an old grey twilight, or of eve or morn,
I know not which, dim as futurity,
And sad and hoary as the ghostly past,
Fills up the space. Hush! not a wind is there,
Not a cloud sails over the battlements,
Not a bell tolls the hour. Is there an hour?
Or is not all gone by, which here did hive,
Of men and their life's ways? Could I but hear
The ticking of a clock, or some one breathing,
Or e'en a cricket's chirping, or the grating
Of the old gates amidst the marble tombs,
I should be sure that this was still the world.
Hark! Hark! Doth nothing stir?
No light, and still no light, besides this ghost
That mocks the dawn, unaltered? Still no sound?
No voice of man? No cry of beast? No rustle
Of any moving creature? And sure I feel
That I remain the same: no more round blood-drops
Roll joyously along my pulseless veins:
The air I seem to breathe is still the same:
And the great dreadful thought, that now comes o'er me
Must remain ever as it is, unchanged.—
This moment doth endure for evermore;
Eternity hath overshadowed time;
And I alone am left of all that lived.

V.

AMALA'S BRIDAL SONG.

(FROM ACT IV., SCENE III.)

Female Voices.

WE have bathed, where none have seen us,
In the lake and in the fountain,
Underneath the charmèd statue
Of the timid, bending Venus,
When the water-nymphs were counting
In the waves the stars of night,
And those maidens started at you,
Your limbs shone through so soft and bright.
But no secrets dare we tell,
For thy slaves unlace thee,
And he, who shall embrace thee,
Waits to try thy beauty's spell.

Male Voices.

We have crowned thee queen of women,
Since love's love, the rose, hath kept her
Court within thy lips and blushes,
And thine eye, in beauty swimming,
Kissing, we rendered up the sceptre,
At whose touch the startled soul
Like an ocean bounds and gushes,
And spirits bend at thy control.
But no secrets dare we tell,
For thy slaves unlace thee,
And he, who shall embrace thee,
Is at hand, and so farewell.

VI.

ATHULF'S SONG.

(FROM ACT IV., SCENE III.)

A CYPRESS-BOUGH, and a rose-wreath sweet,
A wedding-robe, and a winding-sheet,
A bridal-bed and a bier.
Thine be the kisses, maid,
And smiling Love's alarms;
And thou, pale youth, be laid
In the grave's cold arms.
Each in his own charms,
Death and Hymen both are here;
So up with scythe and torch,
And to the old church porch,
While all the bells ring clear;
And rosy, rosy the bed shall bloom,
And earthy, earthy heap up the tomb.

Now tremble dimples on your cheek,
Sweet be your lips to taste and speak,
For he who kisses is near:
By her the bride-god fair,
In youthful power and force;
By him the grizard bare,
Pale knight on a pale horse,
To woo him to a corse.
Death and Hymen both are here
So up with scythe and torch,
And to the old church porch,
While all the bells ring clear
And rosy, rosy the bed shall bloom,
And earthy, earthy heap up the tomb.

VII.

GHOSTLY REVELS.

(FROM ACT V., SCENE IV.)

SCENE.—*The ruined cathedral, the sepulchre, and the cloisters; on which latter is painted the Dance of Death. In the foreground a large covered table, with empty chairs set round it. Moonlight. The clock strikes twelve; on which is heard a*

SONG IN THE AIR.

THE moon doth mock and make me crazy,
And midnight tolls her horrid claim
On ghostly homage. Fie, for shame!
Death, to stand painted there so lazy.
There's nothing but the stars about us,
And they're no tell-tales, but shine quiet:
Come out, and hold a midnight riot,
Where no mortal fool dare flout us:
And, as we rattle in the moonlight pale,
Wanderers shall think 'tis the nightingale.

[*The Deaths, and the figures paired with them, come out of the walls: some seat themselves at the table, and appear to feast, with mocking gestures; others dance fantastically to a rattling music, singing—*

Mummies and skeletons, out of your stones;
Every age, every fashion, and figure of Death:
The death of the giant with petrified bones;
The death of the infant who never drew breath.
Little and gristly, or bony and big,
White and clattering, grassy and yellow;
The partners are waiting, so strike up a jig,

Dance and be merry, for Death's a droll fellow.
The emperor and empress, the king and the queen,
The knight and the abbot, friar fat, friar thin,
The gipsy and beggar, are met on the green;
Where's Death and his sweetheart? We want to begin
In circles, and mazes, and many a figure,
Through clouds, over chimnies and corn-fields yellow,
We'll dance and laugh at the red-nosed grave-digger,
Who dreams not that Death is so merry a fellow.

[*One with a scythe, who has stood sentinel, now sings.*

Although my old ear
Hath neither hammer nor drum,
Methinks I can hear
Living skeletons come.
The cloister re-echoes the call,
And it frightens the lizard,
And, like an old hen, the wall
Cries "Cluck! cluck! back to my gizzard;
'Tis warm, though it's stony,
My chickens so bony."
So come let us hide, each with his bride,
For the wicked are coming who have not yet died.

[*The figures return to their places in the wall.*

Enter ISBRAND, *the* DUKE, SIEGFRIED, MARIO, WOLFRAM *as fool, and conspirators, followed by* ZIBA *and other attendants.*

Isbr. You wonder at my banqueting-house perhaps:
But 'tis my fashion, when the sky is clear,
To drink my wine out in the open air:
And this our sometime meeting-place is shadowy,
And the wind howleth through the ruins bravely.
Now sit, my gentle guests: and you, dark man,

[*To* WOLFR.

Make us as merry as you can, and proudly
Bear the new office, which your friend, the pilgrim,
Has begged for you: 'twas my profession once;
Do justice to that cap.

[*They sit round the table, and partake of the feast, making gestures somewhat similar to those mocked by the figures.*

Duke. Now, having washed our hearts of love and sorrow,
And pledged the rosiness of many a cheek,
And, with the name of many a lustrous maiden,
Ennobled enough cups; feed, once again,
Our hearing with another merry song.

Isbr. 'Tis pity that the music of this dukedom,
Under the former government, went wrong,
Like all the rest: my ministers shall look to't.
But sing again, my men.

Siegfr. What shall it be,
And of what turn? Shall battle's drum be heard?
The chase's trumpet? Shall the noise of Bacchus
Swell in our cheeks, or lazy, sorrowing love
Burthen with sighs our ballad?

Isbr. Try the piece,
You sang me yesternight to sleep with best.
It is for such most profitable ends
We crowned folks encourage all the arts.

SONG.

My goblet's golden lips are dry,
And, as the rose doth pine
For dew, so doth for wine
My goblet's cup;
Rain, O! rain, or it will die;
Rain, fill it up!

Arise, and get thee wings to-night,
Ætna! and let run o'er
Thy wines, a hill no more,
But darkly frown
A cloud, where eagles dare not soar,
Dropping rain down.

Isbr. A very good and thirsty melody:
What say you to it, my court poet?
Wolfr. Good melody! If this be a good melody,
I have at home, fattening in my stye,
A sow that grunts above the nightingale.
Why this will serve for those who feed their veins
With crust, and cheese of dandelion's milk,
And the pure Rhine. When I am sick o' mornings,
With a horn-spoon tinkling my porridge-pot,
'Tis a brave ballad: but in Bacchanal night,
O'er wine, red, black, or purple-bubbling wine,
That takes a man by the brain and whirls him round,
By Bacchus' lip! I like a full-voiced fellow,
A craggy throated, fat cheeked trumpeter,
A barker, a moon-howler, who could sing
Thus, as I heard the snaky mermaids sing
In Phlegethon, that hydrophobic river,
One May-morning in Hell.

SONG.

Old Adam, the carrion crow,
The old crow of Cairo;
He sat in the shower, and let it flow
Under his tail and over his crest;
And through every feather
Leaked the wet weather;
And the bough swung under his nest;

For his beak it was heavy with marrow.
Is that the wind dying? O no;
It's only two devils, that blow
Through a murderer's bones, to and fro,
In the ghosts' moonshine.

Ho! Eve, my grey carrion wife,
When we have supped on king's marrow,
Where shall we drink and make merry our life?
Our nest is in queen Cleopatra's skull,
'Tis cloven and cracked,
And battered and hacked,
But with tears of blue eyes it is full:
Let us drink then, my raven of Cairo.
Is that the wind dying? O no;
It's only two devils, that blow
Through a murderer's bones, to and fro,
In the ghosts' moonshine.

Isbr. Pilgrim, it is with pleasure I acknowledge,
In this your friend, a man of genuine taste:
He imitates my style in prose and verse:
And be assured that this deserving man
Shall soon be knighted, when I have invented
The name of my new order; and perhaps
I'll make him minister. I pledge you, Fool:
Black! something exquisite.
Ziba. Here's wine of Egypt,
Found in a Memphian cellar, and perchance
Pressed from its fruit to wash Sesostris' throat,
Or sweeten the hot palate of Cambyses.
See how it pours, thick, clear, and odorous.
Isbr. 'Tis full, without a bubble on the top:
Pour him the like. Now give a toast.
Wolfr. Excuse me:

I might offend perhaps, being blunt, a stranger,
And rustically speaking rustic thoughts.

Isbr. That shall not be : give us what toast you will,
We'll empty all our goblets at the word,
Without demur.

Siegfr. Well, since the stranger's silent,
I'll give a toast, which, I can warrant you,
Wast yet ne'er drunk. There is a bony man,
Through whom the sun shines, when the sun is out ;
Or the rain drops, when any clouds are weeping ;
Or the wind blows, if Œolus will ; his name,
And let us drink to his success and sanity ;—
But will you truly ?

Isbr. Truly, as I said.

Siegfr. Then round with the health of Death, round with the health
Of Death the bony, Death the great ; round, round.
Empty yourselves, all cups, unto the health
Of great King Death !

Wolfr. Set down the cup, Isbrand, set the cup down.
Drink not, I say.

DRAMATIC SCENES AND FRAGMENTS.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES.

(II.)

I.—AN APOTHEOSIS.

DIANEME *and* Female Attendants.

DIANEME.

SING on, sing ever, and let sobs arise
Beneath the current of your harmony
Breaking its silvery stillness into gushes
Of stealing sadness: let tears fall upon it,
And burst with such a sound, as when a lute-string,
Torn by the passion of its melody,
Gasps its whole soul of music in one sound,
And dies beneath the waves of its own voice!
Be pale thou mooned midnight, and ye stars
Shed fluttering tremors of inconstant light
Upon the moaning billows; timid leaves
O'erwhelm yourselves with shadow, and give out
Your dewy titterings to the air no more!
Clouds, clouds, dark, deadly clouds, let not the moon
Look on his grave!—It is too light: the day
Will rise before I die: how old is evening?

Attend. The tide of darkness now is at its height.
Yon lily-woven cradle of the hours
Hath floated half her shining voyage, nor yet
Is by the current of the morn opposed.

Dianeme. The hour is coming: I must give my soul
To the same moment on whose precious air
My Casimir soared heavenward, for I know
There are a million chambers of the dead,
And every other minute but the same
Would bear me to the one where he is not,
And that were madness. Bring me yon sick lily,—
Yon fevered one.

Attend. Choose any other, lady,
For this is broken, odourless, and scorched,—
Where Death has graved his curse.
Dianeme. Give it to me
I'll weep it full. I have a love for flowers:
Guess you not why? Their roots are in the earth,
And, when the dead awake, or talk in sleep,
These hear their thoughts and write them on their leaves
For heaven to look on: and their dews come down
From the deep bosom of the blue, whereon
The spirits linger, sent by them perchance
With blessings to their friends. Besides all night
They are wide-waking, and the ghosts will pause,
And breathe their thoughts upon them. There, poor blossom,
My soul bedews thee, and my breast shall be
Thy death-bed, and our deaths shall intertwine.
Now, maids, farewell; this is the very echo
Of his expiring time; one snowy cloud
Hangs, like an avalanche of frozen light,
Upon the peak of night's cerulean Alp,
And yon still pine, a bleak anatomy,
Flows, like a river, on the planet's disk,
With its black, wandering arms. Farewell to all:
There is my hand to weep on.
Now my soul
Develops its great beams, and, like a cloud
Racked by the mighty winds, at once expands
Into a measureless, immortal growth.
Crescented night, and amethystine stars,
And day, thou god and glory of the heavens,
Flow on for ever! Play, ye living spheres,
Through the infinity of azure wafted
On billowy music! Airs immortal, strew
Your tressed beauty on the clouds and seas!

And thou the sum of these, nature of all,
Thou providence pervading the whole space
Of measureless creation; thou vast mind,
Whose thoughts these pageantries and seasons are,
Who claspest all in one imagination,
All hail! I too am an eternity;
I am an universe. My soul is bent
Into a girdling circle full of days;
And my fears rise through the deep sky of it,
Blossoming into palpitating stars;
And suns are launched, and planets wake within me;
The words upon my breath are showery clouds,
Sailing along in summer; Casimir
Is the clear truth of ocean, to look back
The beams of my soft love, the world to turn
Within my blue embrace. I am an heaven,
And he my breezes, rays, and harmony;
'Round and around the curvous atmosphere
Of my own real existence I revolve,
Serene and starry with undying love.
I am, I have been, I shall be, O glory!
An universe, a god, a living Ever. [*She dies.*

(XI.)

II.—A CROCODILE.

HARD by the lilied Nile I saw
A duskish river-dragon stretched along,
The brown habergeon of his limbs enamelled
With sanguine almandines and rainy pearl:
And on his back there lay a young one sleeping,
No bigger than a mouse; with eyes like beads,
And a small fragment of its speckled egg
Remaining on its harmless, pulpy snout
A thing to laugh at, as it gaped to catch
The baulking, merry flies. In the iron jaws

Of the great devil-beast, like a pale soul
Fluttering in rocky hell, lightsomely flew
A snowy troculus, with roseate beak
Tearing the hairy leeches from his throat.

(XXII.)

III.—SWEET TO DIE.

IS it not sweet to die? for what is death,
But sighing that we ne'er may sigh again,
Getting at length beyond our tedious selves;
But trampling the last tear from poisonous sorrow,
Spilling our woes, crushing our frozen hopes,
And passing like an incense out of man?
Then, if the body felt, what were its sense,
Turning to daisies gently in the grave,
If now the soul's most delicate delight
When it does filtrate, through the pores of thought,
In love and the enamelled flowers of song?

IV.—SONG.

(FROM TORRISMOND, ACT I., SCENE III.)

HOW many times do I love thee, dear?
Tell me how many thoughts there be
In the atmosphere
Of a new-fall'n year,
Whose white and sable hours appear
The latest flake of Eternity:—
So many times do I love thee, dear.

How many times do I love again?
Tell me how many beads there are
In a silver chain
Of evening rain,
Unravelled from the tumbling main,
And threading the eye of a yellow star:—
So many times do I love again.

LYRICS.

I.—THE PHANTOM-WOOER.

THOMAS LOVELL BEDDOES.

I.

A GHOST, that loved a lady fair,
Ever in the starry air
Of midnight at her pillow stood;
And, with a sweetness skies above
The luring words of human love,
Her soul the phantom wooed.
Sweet and sweet is their poisoned note,
The little snakes' of silver throat,
In mossy skulls that nest and lie,
Ever singing "die, oh! die."

II.

Young soul, put off your flesh, and come
With me into the quiet tomb,
Our bed is lovely, dark, and sweet;
The earth will swing us, as she goes,
Beneath our coverlid of snows,
And the warm leaden sheet.
Dear and dear is their poisoned note,
The little snakes' of silver throat,
In mossy skulls that nest and lie,
Ever singing "die, oh! die."

II.—DREAM-PEDLARY.

I.

IF there were dreams to sell,
What would you buy?
Some cost a passing bell;
Some a light sigh,
That shakes from Life's fresh crown
Only a rose-leaf down

If there were dreams to sell,
Merry and sad to tell,
And the crier rang the bell,
What would you buy?

II.

A cottage lone and still,
With bowers nigh,
Shadowy, my woes to still,
Until I die.
Such pearl from Life's fresh crown
Fain would I shake me down.
Were dreams to have at will,
This would best heal my ill,
This would I buy.

III.

But there were dreams to sell
Ill didst thou buy;
Life is a dream, they tell,
Waking, to die.
Dreaming, a dream to prize,
Is wishing ghosts to rise;
And, if I had the spell
To call the buried well,
Which one would I?

IV.

If there are ghosts to raise,
What shall I call,
Out of hell's murky haze,
Heaven's blue pall?
Raise my loved long-lost boy
To lead me to his joy.—
There are no ghosts to raise;
Out of death lead no ways;
Vain is the call.

v.

Know'st thou not ghosts to sue
No love thou hast.
Else lie, as I will do,
And breathe thy last.
So out of Life's fresh crown
Fall like a rose-leaf down
Thus are the ghosts to woo;
Thus are all dreams made true,
Ever to last!

III.—SONG OF THE STYGIAN NAIADES.

PROSERPINE may pull her flowers,
Wet with dew or wet with tears,
Red with anger, pale with fears,
Is it any fault of ours,
If Pluto be an amorous king,
And comes home nightly, laden,
Underneath his broad bat-wing,
With a gentle, mortal maiden?
Is it so, Wind, is it so?
All that you and I do know
Is, that we saw fly and fix
'Mongst the reeds and flowers of Styx,
Yesterday,
Where the Furies made their hay
For a bed of tiger cubs,
A great fly of Beelzebub's,
The bee of hearts, which mortals name
Cupid, Love, and Fie for shame.

Proserprine may weep in rage,
But, ere you and I have done
Kissing, bathing in the sun,
What I have in yonder cage,

Bird or serpent, wild or tame,
She shall guess and ask in vain;
But, if Pluto does't again,
It shall sing out loud his shame.
What hast caught then? What hast caught?
Nothing but a poet's thought,
Which so light did fall and fix
'Mongst the reeds and flowers of Styx,
Yesterday,
Where the Furies made their hay
For a bed of tiger cubs,—
A great fly of Beelzebub's,
The bee hearts, whom mortals name
Cupid, Love, and Fie for shame.

IV.—THE OLD GHOST.

OVER the water an old ghost strode
To a churchyard on the shore,
And over him the waters had flowed
A thousand years or more,
And pale and wan and weary
Looked never a sprite as he;
For it's lonely and it's dreary
The ghost of a body to be
That has mouldered away in the sea.

Over the billows the old ghost stepped,
And the winds in mockery sung;
For the bodiless ghost would fain have wept
Over the maiden that lay so young
'Mong the thistles and toadstools so hoary.
And he begged of the waves a tear,
But they shook upwards their moonlight glory,
And the shark looked on with a sneer
At his yearning desire and agony.

V.—LORD ALCOHOL.

I.

WHO tames the lion now?
Who smoothes Jove's wrinkles now?
Who is the reckless wight
That in the horrid middle
Of the deserted night
Doth play upon man's brain,
As on a wanton fiddle,
The mad and magic strain,
The reeling, tripping sound,
To which the world goes round?
Sing heigh! ho! diddle!
And then say—
Love, quotha, Love? nay, nay!
It is a spirit fine
Of ale or ancient wine,
Lord Alcohol, the drunken fay,
Lord Alcohol alway!

II.

Who maketh the pipe-clay man
Think all that nature can?
Who dares the gods to flout,
Lay fate beneath the table,
And make him stammer out
A thousand monstrous things,
For history a fable,
Dish-clouts for kings?
And sends the world along
Singing a ribald song
Of heigho! Babel?
Who, I pray—
Love, quotha, Love? nay, nay!
It is a spirit fine
Of ale or ancient wine,
Lord Alcohol, the drunken fay,
Lord Alcohol alway.

Laman Blanchard.

1804—1845.

Samuel Laman Blanchard was, like Thomas Hood, both a serious poet and a wit in verse—a preacher and a jester. He was a brilliant personage among a brilliant company in the earlier half of the century, and did not a little to commemorate its oddities and eccentricities as well as its genius. Lord Lytton, Charles Dickens, Douglas Jerrold, Talfourd, Procter, Thackeray and Albany Fonblanque, were among his friends, as well as Robert Browning, R. H. Horne ("Orion"), John Forster, and George Cruickshank. He was an industrious writer, as well as a graceful poet. He wrote a memoir of Harrison Ainsworth, and published some volumes of "Sketches from Life"—clever, observant, piquant, with just a touch of satire now and then—and "Corporation Characters" exquisitely posed and grouped, with quaint original touches. He is more forgotten and overlooked than he ought to be, considering the varied kinds of work he did, and that he did all with skill and indivuality.

Laman Blanchard was born on May 15th, 1804, at Great Yarmouth, where his father was a successful merchant. The family removed to London, however, when Laman was but a boy, and he was placed at St. Olave's School, Southwark, where he was long remembered as a brilliant pupil. But good

fortune did not stay with the father in London; and it became necessary for Laman at an early age to turn his talents to account. He was, for a time, a reader in a printing office; but his spare hours he devoted to the composition of verses; and, luckily, about this time he became acquainted with Douglas Jerrold, like himself, a struggler. They soon became great friends. In 1827 Blanchard was appointed Secretary to the Zoological Society, where it became possible for him at once to cultivate his literary tastes, and to enter into literary society: and here it was, when he was twenty-four years of age, that he published his first volume of poems—"Lyric Offerings." The volume was inscribed to Charles Lamb, and secured Blanchard that distinguished man's friendship. The volume showed a delicateness, tenderness, and a quaint truthfulness which could not but have attracted and pleased Lamb. Younger men were equally charmed with it: Robert Browning and Lord Lytton among them.

Blanchard was a staunch Liberal, and that led him early to begin to write for newspapers. He relinquished his secretaryship in 1831, and became a journalist, writing for *The Sun*, *The Constitutional*, and other papers, as well as for Jerdan's *Literary Gazette*. No subject, we are told, came amiss to him. By-and-by, he became editor of *The Courier*, which position he kept till 1839. Various efforts were made to secure appointments for him—the editorship of *The Gazette* among them—but they failed; and he fell back on journalism, writing for the *New Monthly*, Jerrold's *Illustrated Magazine*, and others. In 1841 he became sub-editor of the *Examiner*, in which he was associated with Fonblanque

and John Forster, and in this position he remained to the end. He was active, in company with George Cruickshank, in bringing out *The Omnibus*. He experienced a great loss in 1844 in the death of his wife; and he himself did not long survive her: he died by his own hand on February 15th, 1845, in his forty-second year. A short life, yet one of marked activity and productiveness.

One of the most interesting friendships of his life we have not mentioned. At an early period of his career he read the poems of Miss Landon ("L. E. L."), and by-and-by made her acquaintance. They became close friends. Blanchard was the very man to be touched with new interest in her work by the strange and tragic fate that overtook her in the distant land to which she had gone. He wrote her biography with great sympathy and insight as well as discrimination—one of the most touching of poet's lives written by a poet.

His own poems waited a considerable time to receive due and full meed of honour in the shape of a complete collected edition. This was accomplished in 1876 by Blanchard Jerrold, who prefixed a memoir in which the poet's life is sketched with a practised and sympathetic pen. From this memoir we have mainly drawn the facts in our sketch. Mr. Blanchard Jerrold adds a very admirable and judicious summary of his characteristics as a poet and wit; the whole forming a fitting tribute to one who was equally gifted and unfortunate.

Laman Blanchard as a poet is marked at once by great tenderness and freshness of feeling, by flowing metres, and by very felicitous lines and touches. If not a great poet, he is everywhere

an attractive and pleasing one. He touches a varied lyre too—always pure, elevated, and inclined to celebrate common incident and the domestic affections. As a humorous poet, he shares with Thomas Hood the power of punning with a kind of natural ease and grace: and sometimes in his case this is more effective than anywhere else we can recall save in the pages of "Hood's Own." Some of his parodies are exceedingly good. In one or two pieces there is a felicity and daintiness of touch to be surpassed only by the happiest efforts of Praed, Locker, or Austin Dobson.

ALEX. H. JAPP.

POEMS.

SAMUEL LAMAN BLANCHARD.

I.—THE POET'S HEART.

'TIS like unto the dainty flower
That shuts by day its fragrance up,
And lifts unto a darkened hour
Its little essence cup.

'Tis as the grape on which it lives,
That pleasure-ripened heart must be
In sorrow crushed, or ere it gives
The wine of poesy.

Or like some silver-winged fly,
By taper tempted from its flight,
It sparkles, faints, falls quiveringly,
And mingles with the light.

And sure it bears a fortune such
As waits upon that graceful bird,
Whose music, mute to living touch,
At death's dim porch is heard.

And still the dolphin's fate partakes;
Though bright the hue which pride hath given,
'Tis pain whose darting pencil wakes
The master-tints of heaven.

A mine where many a living gem
In cell so deep lies casketed,
That man sends down a sigh for them,
And turns away his head.

But not that dainty flower, the grape,
The insect's sufferance and devotion;
The swan's life-ending song, and shape
Diviner with emotion;

And not the dolphin's sacrifice,
The mine's most rare and dazzling part—
O! not all these could pay its price,
Or form one poet's heart.

II.—THE SHADOWS OF LIFE.

THE secret world in human eyes
Is deluged still with tears;
Our breath is turned to feverish sighs,
And nature mused in fears,
Cannot life rend its thin disguise,
Or be what it appears!

All passion is a blazing brand
Thrown on a ready pile;
Friendship a pressure of the hand;
Pity a winter smile;
And hope but winds across the sand,
That forms, and fails the while.

Our life is as an idle boat
Along a winding river;
An aimless arrow sprung remote
From an ethereal quiver;
And pilotless it still must float,
And aimless speed for ever.

Then let man build upon the grave
A hope that cannot sink,
A wintry waste his foot must brave,
Yet he may find some brink;
Or haply drop within the wave,
Whose wine he thought to drink.

III.—THE DOUBLE LESSON.

MAIDEN of Padua, on thy lap
Thus lightly let the volume lie;
And as within some pictured map
Fair isles and waters we descry,
Trace out, with white and gliding finger,
Along the truth-illumined page,
Its golden lines and words that linger
In memory's cell, from youth to age.

The young Preceptor at thy side
Had pupil ne'er before so fair;
And though that scholar be thy guide,
He sits that fellow-learner there.
As every page unfolds its meaning,
As every rustling leaf turns o'er,
He finds, whilst o'er thy studies leaning,
Beauty where all was dull before.

Familiar is the book to him,
A record of heroic deed;
Yet deems he now his eyes were dim,
And thine have taught them first to read.
Now fades in him the scholar's glory;
For he would give the fame he sought,
With thee to read the simplest story,
And learn what sages never taught.

The precious wealth of countless books,
Lies stowed within his grasping mind;
Yet should he not peruse thy looks,
He now were more than Ignorance blind.
From many a language, old, enchanting,
Rare truths to nations he unrolls;
But one old language yet was wanting,
The one you teach him—tis the soul's.

Full long this lesson, Pupil fair!
All pupils else hath he forsook;
He draws still nearer to thy chair,
And bends yet closer o'er the book.
As time flies on, now fast, now fleeter,
More slowly is the page turned o'er;
The lesson seems to both the sweeter,
And more enchanting grows the lore.

The book now yields a tenderer theme;
The Master loses all his art,
The Pupil droops as in a dream,
And both are reading with one heart,
His eyes upraised a moment glisten
With hope, and joy, and fear profound;
While thine, oh, Maiden! do they *listen?*
They seem to *hear* his sigh's faint sound!

But hark! what sound indeed breaks through
The silence of that life-long hour!
Melodious tinklings, such as sue
For favour near a lady's bower.
Ah! Maid of Padua, music swelling
In tribute to thy radiant charms,
Now greets thee in thy father's dwelling,
To woo thee from a father's arms.

The suitor comes with song and lute,
Youth, riches, pleasures, round him wait;
Go bid him, Paduan Maid, be mute,
Thy lot is cast, he comes too late!
One lesson given, and one received,
The Book prevails, the Lute's denied;
With love thy inmost heart has heaved,
And thou shalt be a student's bride.

IV.—FICTION AND TRUTH.

THERE was a glare of light, a mass
Of things that perish as they pass;
A fiction of the eye and ear,
And living hearts not more sincere.
Mine nursed a wound they could not heal,
Mine saw a scene they could not see;
How little I for them might feel,
How less could they for me!

I knew not why I wandered there,
In secret hopes or dim despair;
Or in that dream of mute surprise
That leads us to a brink, and flies.
But there I breathed amid the throng,
As one who walks a foreign strand,
Watching the waves that roll along,
And part him from his land.

When, sudden as a star that drops
Behind the far-off forest tops,
Brief as the quick and quivering spark
On struggling waters wide and dark—
There came a spirit on my path,
A beauty dying in its birth,
Gifted with all that woman hath
Of music and of mirth.

A brow, the whitest world of thought
That ever pen or pencil wrought;
A breast as wonderful and warm
As ever love-dream failed to form.
Methought although of mortal mould
It held the flame of years to come:
I asked my heart—'twas sick and cold;
My hope—but it was dumb.

It came and claimed no kindred there;
But glanced on me as though a hair,
Plucked from the brow of Time, might be
A chain to bind it unto me.
On me it gazed, an instant gazed,
Then passed through closing crowds again,
A pinnace on the sea-foam raised
To strike the swimmer's brain.

Thus fairest things should vanish fleet
Ere earth hath stained their falling feet,
And all the blossoms she may shed
Are destined to adorn the dead.
I wished its momentary stay,
Could be my term of life below,
Unknown to pass in still display,
By one regretted go.

Its presence came so brightly brief,
Its gladness bore no tinge of grief,
The cheek of hope but not its fears,
The eyes of love without their tears.
Alas, the eye that chased my pain
May now be weeping o'er its own;
The breast where angels might have lain
Tears may have turned to stone.

And where that light was found and lost,
I counted o'er a cloud-like host,
Bright with the sunshine which they shade
While all beneath them freeze and fade,
The flame had sunk where it began,
The scene was still a painted show;
They said 'twas truth—I turned to Man,
And sighed to find it so.

SONNETS.

SAMUEL LAMAN BLANCHARD.

I.—HIDDEN JOYS.

PLEASURES lie thickest where no pleasures seem,
There's not a leaf that falls upon the ground
But holds some joy, of silence, or of sound;
Some sprite begotten of a summer dream.
The very meanest things are made supreme
With innate ecstasy. No grain of sand
But moves a bright and million-peopled land,
And hath its Edens and its Eves, I deem.
For Love, though blind himself, a curious eye
Hath lent me, to behold the hearts of things,
And touched mine ear with power. Thus far or nigh,
Minute or mighty, fixed or free with wings,
Delight from many a nameless covert sly
Peeps sparkling, and in tones familiar sings.

II.—NATURAL STUDIES.

TO see the grace and glory of the year,
Cradled in leaves, grow with the breath of May,
At whose warm touch the winter melts away,
And all the wakened heaven, shows full and clear;
To mark the faint but freshening light appear,
And throw its first fair gold upon the grey,
Giving glad promise of the dazzling day;
To view the mute and labouring Night uprear
Its starriness through storms; or trace the tide
Forth from its pebbly prison flowing free—
These link the soul, O Nature! unto thee;
And in these scenes are figured and implied
The dawn and growth of life. When taught by pride
The Mind disdains the dust and feels its liberty.

III.—EVENING.

ALREADY hath the day grown grey with age;
And in the west, like to a conqueror crowned,
Is faint with too much glory. On the ground
He flings his dazzling arms; and, as a sage,
Prepares him for a cloud-hung hermitage,
Where Meditation meets him at the door;
And all around—on wall, and roof, and floor,
Some pensive star unfolds its silver page
Of truth, which God's own hand hath testified.
Sweet Eve! whom poets sing to us as a bride,
Queen of the quiet—Eden of Time's bright map—
Thy look allures me from my hushed fireside,
And sharp leaves rustling at my casement tap,
And beckon forth my mind to dream upon thy lap!

IV.—MIDNIGHT.

THE pulse of Time is stopt; a silentness
Hath seized the waters, and the winds, and all
That motion claims or musical natural;
The altar of all life stands victimless.
Of beast or bird, in joyance or distress,
All token sleeps; nor leaf is heard to fall
As Midnight holds her breath! The kingly hall
Is barred—the slave inherits an excess
Of infelt loyalty—the exile views
His home in dreams; nay, even the student breaks
From his worn volume, and forgets to muse
On laws and worlds—the miser only wakes,
Warming his fingers at a golden heap,
He smiles in Midnight's face, and will not trust to sleep.

Charles Whitehead.

1804—1862.

The claims of Charles Whitehead as a poet are based mainly on "The Solitary," a poem of reflection rather than of incident or description, and on one or two fine sonnets. "The Solitary"—a poem that shows unquestionable imagination—received the warm critical approval of Professor Wilson in the "Noctes Ambrosianæ." The extracts from it, given in the following pages, entitled respectively, "The Poet" (p. 566), and "By the Grave" (p. 569), are two of its most beautiful and pathetic passages. Probably, however, Whitehead's noblest poetical work is to be found in the sonnet beginning "As yonder lamp," etc. (p. 572),—a sonnet greatly admired by Dante Rossetti and many critics of eminence. As a novelist, Whitehead is chiefly remarkable as the author of "Richard Savage," and of a brief story entitled "The Confession of James Wilson." Although his tendency towards exaggerated sensation and towards the delineation of themes almost too ghastly at times for art sensibly injures him as a writer of fiction, it cannot be doubted that the works just named entitle him to a not unimportant place among English novelists. He had what an intimate friend of his once called an eighteenth-century mind; and "Richard Savage" (which was much admired by Dickens) is, in many respects, an

eighteenth-century novel. It is so in its largeness of plot—a plot embracing a greater number of incidents, and probably a larger number of characters, than are to be met with in a novel of the present age of the same kind and treatment. Moreover, it depends for its interest, not on unfamiliar situations, but on absolute fidelity of representation; and if it be a high merit for the atmosphere of a tale strikingly to correspond with the period in which it is laid, then, assuredly, "Richard Savage" has high merit, for it is full of the atmosphere of its period.

The son of a city merchant, and born in London in 1804, Whitehead was himself engaged for a while in commercial pursuits. "The Solitary" appeared in 1831, and soon afterwards Whitehead became an author by profession. In 1834 he published "The Lives of British Highwaymen" (probably written some years before, and the most unworthy of his productions), and "The Autobiography of Jack Ketch." The latter book, entirely one of fiction, is, in the main, a burlesque representation of the inner life of the hangman. Passages of serious interest occur, however, and into one of the characters named Misty, Whitehead has put much of his own personality. It contains, also, the remarkable episodical tale, "The Confession of James Wilson" mentioned above. Whitehead's blank verse drama, "The Cavalier," produced at the Haymarket Theatre on September 15th, 1836, with Ellen Tree and Vandenhoff in the principal parts, has been once or twice revived, notably at the Lyceum Theatre twenty years later. The plot is laid in Restoration times. Many of the scenes possess a certain beauty and subtilty of thought; but there are few of those

delicately wrought phrases, full of poetic strength, which give distinction to "The Solitary." Probably the success of "Jack Ketch"—the romance had been described in the *Athenæum* as possessing "force and talent enough to set up half-a-dozen novelists"—led to one of the most interesting incidents in Whitehead's life. This incident was his being invited, by Messrs. Chapman & Hall, to associate himself with Seymour in the production of the book which afterwards became famous as the "Pickwick Papers." He declined the commission, assigning as a reason inability to produce the "copy" with sufficient regularity, but recommended his friend Dickens. As a further link between Whitehead and Dickens, it may be mentioned that Whitehead revised the "Memoirs of Grimaldi," edited by Dickens under his pseudonym of Boz. This volume, published in 1846, has gone through many editions. "Richard Savage" appeared in 1842, with illustrations by Leech. Among Whitehead's other important works are "The Earl of Essex," an historical romance (1843); "Smiles and Tears; or, The Romance of Life," a series of collected stories (1847); and "The Solitary and other Poems," a collected edition of his poetical works (1849). "The Spanish Marriage," a fragment of a poetical drama, published just before his death, has considerable merit.

When "Richard Savage" was first published, Whitehead had every prospect of success as a man of letters. Not only had he great powers, but he was favourably situated for their exercise. He was known to all the famous men of letters of his day, and they all thought him a man of gifts, able, if he so willed, to achieve fame. He was a member of

the well-known Mulberry Club, frequented by Douglas Jerrold and other wits. Gradually, however, he began to yield to intemperance, and this wrecked his life. His friends, Dickens among the rest, were reluctantly compelled to fall away from him. In 1857 he went to Australia—perhaps with a delusive hope of conquering his unhappy propensity. He sank into destitution, and died miserably in the Melbourne Hospital on July 5th, 1862.

Notwithstanding his infirmities of disposition, Whitehead had personal qualities which endeared him to those who knew him well. Shortly before his death a Melbourne gentleman, belonging both to "the literary and the medical crafts, took Whitehead into his own house, and surrounded him with all the comforts and consolations which the thoughtful kindness of his host and his family could supply." But "the old craving became too strong for the weak irresolute Bohemian," and he suddenly disappeared, leaving no clue to his whereabouts. Not till some time afterwards did his benefactor hear that he had been picked up exhausted in one of the streets, had been taken to the hospital, had died there, and been buried, without a friend to follow his remains, in a pauper's grave. Only one more circumstance was required to complete the pathos of the situation; nor was it wanting, for when an application was made for permission to remove Whitehead's body to a private grave, permission was refused.

MACKENZIE BELL.

THE SOLITARY.

CHARLES WHITEHEAD.

I.

NIGHT

PART I. STANZAS I—VI.

"With other ministrations thou, O Nature!
Healest thy wandering and distempered child;
Thou pourest on him thy soft influences,
Thy sunny hues, fair forms, and breathing sweets,
Thy melodies of woods, and winds, and waters;
Till he relent, and can no more endure
To be a jarring and a dissonant thing."

COLERIDGE.

AN hour, and this majestic day is gone;
Another messenger flown in fleet quest
Of Time. Behold! one winged cloud alone,
Like a spread dragon overhangs the west,
Bathing the splendour of his crimson crest
In the sun's last suffusion,—he hath roll'd
His vast length o'er the dewy sky, imprest
With the warm dyes of many-color'd gold,
Which, now the sun is sunk, wax faint, and grey, and cold

Lone Hesperus hath climb'd the western stair,
And hung his silver cresset forth in vain,
For hungry Darkness crawling from his lair
Moves o'er the mountain, and with flooding mane
Flings out thick gloom over th' ethereal plain,
And the dun welkin trembles into night;
Hark! the sad Nightingale begins her strain,
And Echo, like a weary anchorite,
Sits crouching in the woods, mute in her own despite.

And now the Moon, bursting her watery prison,
Heaves her full orb into the azure clear,
Pale witness, from the slumbering sea new-risen,
To glorify the landscape far and near,
All beauteous things more beautiful appear;
The sky-crown'd summit of the mountain gleams
(Smote by the star-point of her glittering spear)
More steadfastly, and all the valley seems
Strown with a softer light, the atmosphere of dreams!

How still! as though Silence herself were dead,
And her wan ghost were floating in the air;
The Moon glides o'er the heaven with printless tread,
And to her far-off frontier doth repair;
O'er-wearied lids are closing everywhere;—
All living things that own the touch of sleep
Are beckon'd, as the wasting moments wear,
Till, one by one, in valley, or from steep,
Unto their several homes they, and their shadows, creep.

And all at length are gone; the dew impearl'd
Is hanging on the flow'r and on the grass,
That when from out the dream-girt under-world
The fairy train to their light measures pass,
Each lady-elf may find a looking glass,
To bind her hair and smooth her tiny brow;
The moonlight is up-gather'd in a mass,
Nor moves upon the waveless water now,
The aspen leaf scarce stirs upon the stirless bough.

How many in the deaf oblivious realm
Of Sleep, are hushed beneath her dynasty;
Even he, whom many a woe and grief o'erwhelm,
Who but recruits his jaded strength to try
Another fall with stronger destiny
And will not be o'ermaster'd, sinks at last,
Even as a dreamless babe to rest, while I,
Lingering upon the bleak shore of the past,
My hopes into that sea, like worthless pebbles, cast.

II.

THE SEASONS.

XLVI—XLVIII.

The Seasons are my friends, companions dear,
Hale Winter will I tend with constant feet,
When over wold and desert, lake and mere,
He sails triumphant in a rack of sleet,
With his rude joy the russet earth to greet
Pinching the tiny brook and infant ferry;
And I will hear him on his mountain seat,
Shouting his boisterous carol shrill and merry,
Crown'd with a Christmas wreath of crimson holly-berry.

Young Spring will I encounter, coy and arch,
When in her humid scarf she leaves the hills,
Her dewy cheeks dried by the winds of March,
To set the pebbly music of the rills,
As yet scarce freed from stubborn icicles;
And Summer shall entice me once again,
Ere yet the light her golden dew distils,
To intercept the morning of the plain,
And see Dan Phœbus slowly tend his drowsy wain.

But, pensive Autumn, most with thee I love,
When the wrung peasant's anxious toil is done,
Among thy bound and golden sheaves to rove,
And glean the harvest of a setting sun,
From the pure mellowing fields of ether won;
And in some sloping meadow, musing, sit,
Till Vesper rising slowly, widow'd Nun,
Reads whisperingly, her radiant lamp new-lit,
The gospel of the stars, great Nature's holy writ!

III.

THE POET.

PART II. STANZAS XXVI—XXXIII.

Alas! for all the miseries that strew
The common path our trackless footsteps make,
As we creep on this maze of darkness through;
The hearts that break, the hearts that cannot break,
The hearts that bury their last hopes, and take
E'en comfort from the grave, and struggle still,
And, lingering on for very misery's sake,
Live—not because they would, but that they will;
And die when baffled Death is left no pow'r to kill.

And, Oh! how many sorrows hang between
Heav'n and the prayers whereto Heav'n is denied
The countless woes that never must be seen,
The glorious duplicity of Pride
Which, what it must endure, at least must hide,
The madman gazing on his rusted chain,
The hideous calmness of the suicide,
Whose dust the earth receives, as water rain—
Our joys are frail, Oh God! and do we live in vain?

No—our best recompense is patience here—
There is more pow'r toward Heav'n to elevate,
In the descending orbit of a tear,
Than all the round earth, and its empty state,
Can wrest from the supremacy of Fate;
The poet's heavenly fire within the breast,
Cannot th' obdurate heart reanimate;
Yea, e'en the poet cloth'd in amplest vest;
Oh! let me linger yet, and deem his spirit blest.

His youth is as a vision wrought in air,
A noon-tide palace painted in the sun,
Resort of all the million creatures fair,
Minions of fancy, which continuous run
From the brain's crucible wherein they are spun;
But there are forms of a diviner dream,
Beauty with vestal eyes, pure as a nun,
Love that doth make eternity his theme,
And friendship still unchang'd in life's aye-changing stream

His poesy is as a vessel mann'd
By love, impell'd by strength, or Cupid's bow
Drawn by the strong unerring Pythran's hand;
Or like th' unquarried marble, by a blow,
Dealt with the fervid force of Angelo,
Struck into life, which, plac'd in some vast hall,
Freezes the soul into a heavenly glow,
Chastening the air around its pedestal
That it with tongue-less echoes may no longer brawl.

His hand lets loose the whirlwind, or subdues,
And smooths the ocean till its rage be still,
Caparisons the clouds in gorgeous hues
Of heav'n, and bids the giddy air fulfil,
Unmurmuring, all the impulse of his will;
His spirit breathes through flow'r and trampled weed,
And puts a voice into the empty rill,
Or dallies with the dew-drop's watery bead,
Hanging upon the thorn, a light-encircled seed.

No doubt invests him yet, nor the dim dread
Of something felt too soon, though ne'er exprest;
But a faint halo shrines his radiant head,
A laurel shade, and with undoubting breast
He holds his course, unshackl'd, unpossest;
As the maned lion walks the desert, free,
Startling the morn; untir'd as, when in quest
Of some new shore, th' irrevocable sea
Rolls on where cleaving prow may never hope to be.

And standing on a far oft promotory
Watching the horizon, his keen eyes descry
The ruddy day-break of young blushing glory,
Expanding like a flower of crimson dye,
Whose buds are sparkles of the galaxy;
So stands, as yet unscath'd, some lofty pine,
Which, as it rears its green strength to the sky,
First sees Aurora leave her golden shrine
Towering alone upon the cloud-girt Appennine.

IV.

BY THE GRAVE.

PART III. STANZAS I—V AND VIII—X.

A sweet and lovely Evening—Heav'n and earth
Do lend each other beauty, and the cloud
Blushes auspicious of to-morrow's birth;
Let not my spirit be too rudely bow'd,
By the tumultuous throng and busy crowd,
That memory doth ev'n by this scene restore;
And bid my throbbing heart speak not so loud;
For oh! my brother, crush'd, and stricken sore,
Unto thy silent grave I bend my steps once more.

And many a Spring hath died above thy head,
And many a Summer flow'r that blooms to fade;
And Autumn many a leafy offering shed,
Whereof the Winter his cold couch hath made;
The young green tree affords an ampler shade;
And many a musing stranger, wandering by,
Hath past the lowly turf where thou art laid,
And heav'd, perchance, th' involuntary sigh,
Since thy neglected grave thy brother hath been nigh.

And now he comes—ah! can he be the same
That with religious step, in early youth,
Awe-struck and trembling to thy chamber came,
And kiss'd thy forehead pale—in earnest sooth
Vowing to dedicate his soul to truth,
For ever, for thy sake? Ah! bootless vow!
But pity, fare-thee-well, and thankless ruth—
For they must reap who sow, who sow must plough,
And, as thine ashes then, cold is his bosom now.

Oh! chang'd,—how chang'd—since that once heav'nly prime
When Love, and Hope, and Happiness were new,
And not an hour, compell'd from niggard time,
But with spontaneous strength and vigour drew
Sweets from the conscious earth, like honey-dew;
Now Love, and Hope, and Happiness are slain,
And I, who reckless the blithe kindred slew,
Like a poor prodigal alone remain,
And sink upon thy grave—a very child again!

Oh! bitter tears, though sweet; contrasted ever,
Thus joy and grief our future peace destroy,
And what Time hath bound up his hand will sever,
And our best gold is but impure alloy,
And happiness but miserable joy—
Alas! that man, by some perverse decree,
Should mar the better wisdom of the boy,
And never be, and never seek to be,
Aught but a chainless slave, most fetter'd when most free.

Oh! that the spade had delv'd my early tomb
Instead of thine—for I was to the worm
A closer kinsman, weaker from the womb,
Windfall of glory, canker'd from the germ,
Of baser earth, and less resisting form—
Thou had'st disdain'd the weakness that o'ercame
My nature, and, undaunted by the storm,
Had'st thrown away the visor of false shame,
And with unglaived hand struck out thy way to fame!

Had'st thou but liv'd—by Heav'n!—but I am dumb,
Or I should madly question His behest,
Who all so sudden bade His Angel come,
To lay thee in death's hard unconscious breast;
The mellow sun falls down into the west,
What marvel? he shall rise another day;
But should his sultry orb be dispossest,
And in its half meridian torn away,
Were wonder impious then, thou better Christian, say?

Yet I repine not, no, my Brother, grief
Is stronger than the strongest—yea, more strong,
Can it be so? then happiness is brief
In a rude world, where nought but pain is long.
Thou art, I trust, the blessed few among,
Where wisdom and immortal fancy dwell,
And with that hope, I bear this ceaseless wrong,
And my vain sighs back to my heart compel,
Which echoes to that word—that voiceless word—farewell!

V.

MORNING.

PART III. STANZAS XLVIII AND XLIX.

But soft—a motion trembles in the sky,
And with a timid streak of dubious glow
Curdles the east, and from his terrace high,
The glad procession of the light doth go;
Clear, and more clear, all neighbouring objects grow,
Wrought from the sable texture of the dark,
And now a fresh chill air begins to blow,
And now springs up the voluntary lark,
And the great sun appears, Heaven's glorious hierarch!

Another day breaks forth—another day—
Then let me close this ineffectual strain,
From painful, passive torture call'd away,
To quick reality of active pain;
Enough, enough, the rust is on the chain:—
Return'd to do diurnal penance still,
To the last dregs the bitter cup to drain,
The gloomy circuit of my fate fulfil,
This is my measur'd task—this the Almighty's will!

SONNET.

CHARLES WHITEHEAD.

AS yonder lamp in my vacated room
With arduous flame disputes the darksome night,
And can, with its involuntary light,
But lifeless things that near it stand, illume;
Yet all the while it doth itself consume;
And, ere the sun begin its heavenly height
With courier beams that meet the shepherd's sight,
There, whence its life arose, shall be its tomb.
So wastes my light away. Perforce confined
To common things, a limit to its sphere,
It shines on worthless trifles undesigned,
With fainter ray each hour imprison'd here.
Alas! to know that the consuming mind
Shall leave its lamp cold, ere the sun appear.

Robert Stephen Hawker.

1804—1875.

THERE is seldom an entirely satisfying harmony between a poet and his environment—between his work and the conditions, personal or relative, in the midst of which it is produced. The life and beauty of nature have been celebrated in immortal verse by confirmed townsmen who, surrounded by dingy streets, have babbled of green fields; loose-living profligates have sung some of our sweetest and purest songs of love; childless men have found a congenial theme in the winning graces of little children; and sad spirits walking in the gloom have touched the springs of the laughter of the world. It is, therefore, peculiarly refreshing to make the acquaintance of a poet whose life and work had a beautiful homogeneity, a vital relationship each to each, so that our thought of Hawker the person and our thought of Hawker the poet are not two thoughts but one: they do not contradict and confuse but supplement and emphasise each other. A man whose instinctive and ineradicable unconventionality was so marked that casual observers sometimes thought him crazy, whose love for free, unadulterated nature was only equalled by his enthusiasm of humanity, and to whom nature was the home and man the charge of imminent spiritual presences, could hardly have been more

happily placed than in that lonely parish of Morwenstow on the wild Cornish coast, where the thunder of the Atlantic made solemn and perpetual music, where men and women lived a life of picturesque and half-pagan rudeness, and where every rock and ruin was surrounded with its atmosphere of saintly legend.

Robert Stephen Hawker was born at Stoke Damerel, on December 4th, 1804, his father Mr. J. S. Hawker, then a medical man but afterwards a clergyman, being a son of the Rev. Dr. Hawker of Plymouth. A bright boyhood, distinguished mainly by innocent but fantastic ingenuities of mischief—which provide for the pages of Mr. Baring Gould's biography some most entertaining entries—was followed by a very ordinary university career and by a very extraordinary marriage, destined, however, in spite of its almost unique oddity to be succeeded by nearly forty years of perfect wedded happiness. Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter presented him to the small living of Morwenstow, where he settled down to what proved to be a life-long labour; never losing his keen inward sense of humour or the outward oddities which made him one of the characters of the country-side, but devoting himself to his chosen work with an earnestness, an ardour, a passionate enthusiasm which showed that he had not been self-deceived when he felt the call to the ministry of the Church. The story of Hawker's work at Morwenstow cannot be told in detail here, but is a unique chapter in the ecclesiastical history of England, for it was the work not of an ordinary parish priest but of a missionary among wrecking, smuggling, superstitious savages

upon whom his influence was not simply meliorative and educational but radically transforming,—men and women who stood in need not merely of Christianity but of elementary civilisation. Here the Vicar of Morwenstow worked on to his sixtieth year which was made sorrowfully memorable by the loss of his wife. Though she was more than twenty years older than himself his lover-like devotion had never waned, and during the months which immediately succeeded her decease the widowed man sank into a state of pitiable nervous depression; but before long a new interest grew up in his heart, and in the December of 1864 he married Miss Kuczynski, a Polish lady who had come into his parish as a governess. For ten years longer, during which three daughters were born to him, he laboured on with apparently unfailing powers, and the end came with little warning. While on a visit to Plymouth Hawker became seriously ill, and grew worse much too rapidly to allow of his being removed home. He passed away on the 15th of August 1875, having twelve hours previously been received into the Roman Catholic Church.

The most striking of the purely literary qualities of Hawker's poems are simplicity and inartificiality; and it is necessary to use both words because of late we have so often been asked to admire a simplicity which is thoroughly artificial, which has no spontaneity, but which is the result of a deliberate striving after an effect that has struck some literary artist as likely to be a pleasing novelty in an age of complex feeling and elaborated expression. Hawker had a style,—that is, he had a mode of expression which was the natural outcome of a

strongly individualised nature; but the relation between his verse and the impassioned thought which it utters is so vital and organic, so entirely a relation of necessity rather than of choice, that the hateful new word "stylist" can never be used of him by any sane critic. He was the typical poet described by Theseus as "of imagination all compact," and throughout his life the simplest facts or incidents were seen by him surrounded with a halo of transfiguring thought and association. A fine example of this idealising instinct is to be found in a poem in which with his wonted fervour he does homage to his diocesan, the celebrated "Henry of Exeter." The poet is not in the least oppressed by the thought of the petty wrangling and interminable litigation in which that remarkable prelate spent so large a portion of his time; he seizes at once upon the one poetical aspect of the curious career; goes in imagination to the council-chamber of the Peers of England; listens to his spiritual father pleading the cause of the Church against a stiffnecked and gainsaying generation; and thus concludes an apostrophe to the little temple at Morwenstow in which the Bishop has just been ministering.

"Fane of the woods, farewell! a holier thought
Henceforth be thine with added beauty blest!
The presence of this day hath surely wrought
A charm immortal for thy home of rest.
Long may the swallow find her wonted nest.
On thy grey walls: long may the breezes bear
The sounds of worship from thy happy breast!
The mind that shook whole Senates hath been there;
Strong be the soul of faith, and firm the voice of prayer."

It is, however, hardly necessary to say that, though

Hawker could catch the one poetic side of a prosaic subject which a thousand men would have missed, he was naturally drawn towards themes the poetical suggestiveness of which was obvious and unmistakable. In Cornish legendary lore, and especially in that portion of it which deals with Christian history or could be made subservient to a mystical Christian use, was a poetic treasure which had been, as it were, "hid in a field," waiting for a finder who would know how to prize and use it. Hawker had a claim to the treasure that lay deeper than mere taste. His numerous ballads and poems of various kinds, suggested by local ecclesiastical and other legends, derive much of their peculiar power from the implicit and child-like faith by which they are evidently inspired. He writes as the early Christian painters worked, not as a mere artist engaged in the decorative treatment of charming fictions, but as a believer anxious to show the beauty of divine and indubitable facts.

One of his poems, a fragment, containing some of his finest work, is entitled "The Quest of the Sangraal," and it is interesting to notice how his treatment of the legend differs from that of Lord Tennyson. The latter regards the quest as a mythical representation of the morbid excitement which is one of the products of spiritual decay, and accordingly the king, who symbolises the perfect sanity of the soul cannot but regard it with sad foreboding; while to the latter it is a real and grand culmination of spiritual vitality, and "Arthur, the son of Uter and the Night," is the first to raise the cry,—

"Ho! for the Sangraal, vanished vase of God."

And this is a typical specimen of Hawker's work in

the field of legend. Any story which satisfied his imagination and confirmed his faith carried its own evidence with it, and stood in no need of the gross external proof demanded by an age which knows more of historic criticism than of "the witness of the Spirit." Matthew Arnold in many a musical wail has lamented that we cannot sing songs as were sung of old, because we have lost the beliefs which possessed the older singers. Robert Stephen Hawker certainly did not labour under this disqualification. His was the hunger and thirst for the unknown and infinite which inspired Tertullian's celebrated *Certum quia impossibile est*,—a saying which one feels must have been as spiritually fascinating to Hawker as it was intellectually attractive to Sir Thomas Browne.

In the border region—the region in which the things of sense still remain, but are seen through a luminous mist of spiritual symbolism and association—Hawker was peculiarly at home. He never went on a deliberate search after hidden meanings or morals, like the mechanically-minded mystics, to whom every object in nature and in Christian art is an arbitrary hieroglyph with no fluidity of significance or multiplicity of suggestion. His mind worked instinctively; he felt before he saw; and indicated, with the indescribable truth of emotion rather than the outlined precision of thought, the unseen spiritual vesture with which things seen are clothed, and by which they are glorified. There is no more characteristic illustration of the spiritual activity of his nature than the sonnet entitled "The Vine," the theme of which is supplied by what was to him a never-failing source of inspiring suggestion,

the ancient church of that St. Morwenna from which his parish took its name—

> "Hearken! There is in old Morwenna's shrine,
> A lonely sanctuary of the Saxon days,
> Reared by the Severn sea for prayer and praise,
> Amid the carved work of the roof, a vine.
> Its root is where the eastern sunbeams fall,
> First in the chancel, then along the wall;
> Slowly it travels on, a leafy line
> With here and there a cluster, and anon
> More and more grapes, until the growth hath gone
> Through arch and aisle. Hearken! and heed the sign.
> See at the altar-side the steadfast root;
> Mark well the branches, count the summer fruit:
> So let a meek and faithful heart be thine,
> And gather from that tree a parable divine."

The kind of work represented here must be enjoyed for its beauty, tenderness, and spiritual fervour, but it is often somewhat lacking in healthy virility, and it is therefore specially needful to speak of Hawker as an essentially *manly* poet. His eager sympathy with the ascetic life, and a cloistral tendency of imagination which, if not inborn, became at an early age habitual, never lessened his interest in the simpler and more ordinary human emotions, to which in so many of his poems he had given beautiful and adequate expression, without ever laying himself open to the charge often, and not always unjustly, brought against Wordsworth of having suffered the prosaic accidents of his subjects to overpower—in so far at least as immediate impression was concerned—their really poetic essentials. Nor did his mystical prepossessions ever dull his enjoyment of the merely sensuous side of Nature: and the pleasure he derived from the sonorous break

of a mighty wave upon an opposing cliff, the strong flight of a solitary sea-fowl, or the quiet valley through which a mountain stream rustles to the sea, had as much of the unconscious quality which belongs to the enjoyment of the typical sportsman as of the more contemplative delight which is the possession of a poet with an eye for the things "behind this show."

It is indeed not unfitting that the emphasis which belongs to any last word should be given to the expression of a conviction that the main charm of Hawker's verse is to be found in its rich humanity. It is verse through which warm blood circulates, in which a strong pulse beats;—verse which moves us as we are moved by a human voice of tenderness in time of sorrow, by the ringing accent of courage in time of fear. There have been finer lyrics than the one which begins "Naiad for Grecian waters," finer sonnets than "Pater vester pascit illa," finer ballads than "The Silent Tower of Bottreaux;" but there are few poems of any rank which find their way home to us more immediately or permanently than they.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

SONGS AND BALLADS.

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER.

I.—THE SONG OF THE WESTERN MEN.

1852.

A GOOD sword and a trusty hand!
A merry heart and true!
King James's men shall understand
What Cornish lads can do.

And have they fixed the where and when?
And shall Trelawny die?
Here's twenty thousand Cornish men
Will know the reason why!

Out spake their captain brave and bold,
A merry wight was he:
"If London Tower were Michael's hold,
We'll set Trelawny free!

"We'll cross the Tamar, land to land,
The Severn is no stay,
With 'one and all,' and hand in hand,
And who shall bid us nay?

"And when we come to London Wall,
A pleasant sight to view,
Come forth! come forth, ye cowards all,
Here's men as good as you!

"Trelawny he's in keep and hold,
Trelawny he may die:
But here's twenty thousand Cornish bold,
Will know the reason why!"

II.—THE SILENT TOWER OF BOTTREAU.

1831.

The rugged heights that line the sea-shore in the neighbourhood of Tintadgel Castle and Church are crested with towers. Among these, that of Bottreau, or, as it is now written, Boscastle, is without bells. The silence of this wild and lonely churchyard on festive or solemn occasions is not a little striking. On enquiry I was told that the bells were once shipped for this church, but that when the vessel was within sight of the tower the blasphemy of her captain was punished in the manner related in the Poem. The bells, they told me, still lie in the bay, and announce by strange sounds the approach of a storm.

TINTADGEL bells ring o'er the tide,
The boy leans on his vessel side;
He hears that sound, and dreams of home
Soothe the wild orphan of the foam.
"Come to thy God in time!"
Thus saith their pealing chime:
Youth, manhood, old age past,
"Come to thy God at last."

But why are Bottreau's echoes still?
Her tower stands proudly on the hill;
Yet the strange chough that home hath found,
The lamb lies sleeping on the ground.
"Come to thy God in time!"
Should be her answering chime:
"Come to thy God at last!"
Should echo on the blast.

The ship rode down with courses free,
The daughter of a distant sea:
Her sheet was loose, her anchor stored,
The merry Bottreau bells on board.

"Come to thy God in time!"
Rung out Tintadgel chime;
Youth, manhood, old age past,
"Come to thy God at last!"

The pilot heard his native bells
Hang on the breeze in fitful swells;
"Thank God," with reverent brow he cried,
"We make the shore with evening's tide."
"Come to thy God in time!"
It was his marriage chime:
Youth, manhood, old age past,
His bell must ring at last.

"Thank God, thou whining knave, on land,
But thank, at sea, the steerman's hand,"
The captain's voice above the gale:
"Thank the good ship and ready sail."
"Come to thy God in time!"
Sad grew the boding chime:
"Come to thy God at last!"
Boomed heavy on the blast.

Uprose that sea! as if it heard
The mighty Master's signal-word:
What thrills the captain's whitening lip?
The death-groans of his sinking ship.
"Come to thy God in time!"
Swung deep the funeral chime:
Grace, mercy, kindness past,
"Come to thy God at last!"

Long did the rescued pilot tell—
When grey hairs o'er his forehead fell,
While those around would hear and weep—
That fearful judgment of the deep.

"Come to thy God in time!"
He read his native chime:
Youth, manhood, old age past,
His bell rung out at last.

Still when the storm of Bottreau's waves
Is wakening in his weedy caves:
Those bells, that sullen surges hide,
Peal their deep notes beneath the tide:
"Come to thy God in time!"
Thus saith the ocean chime:
Storm, billow, whirlwind past,
"Come to thy God at last!"

III.—THE DEATH-RACE.

1832.

WATCH ye, and ward ye! a ship in sight,
And bearing down for Trebarra Height,
She folds her wings by that rocky strand:
Watch ye, and ward ye! a boat on land!

Hush! for they glide from yonder cave
To greet these strangers of the wave;
Wait! since they pace the seaward glen
With the measured tread of mourning men.

"Hold! masters, hold! ye tarry here,
What corpse is laid on your solemn bier?
Yon minster-ground were a calmer grave
Than the roving bark, or the weedy wave!"

"Strong vows we made to our sister dead
To hew in fair France her narrow bed;
And her angry ghost will win no rest
If your Cornish earth lie on her breast."

They rend that pall in the glaring light,
By St. Michael of Carne! 'twas an awful sight!
For those folded hands were meekly laid
On the silent breast of a shrouded maid.

"God speed, my masters, your mournful way!
Go, bury your dead where best ye may!
But the Norroway barks are over the deep,
So we watch and ward from our guarded steep."

Who comes with weapon? who comes with steed?
Ye may hear far off their clanking speed;
What knight in steel is thundering on?
Ye may know the voice of the grim Sir John.

"Saw ye my daughter, my Gwennah bright,
Borne out for dead at the deep of night?"
"Too late! too late!" cried the warder pale.
"Lo! the full deck, and the rushing sail!"

They have roused that maid from her trance of sleep,
They have spread their sails to the roaring deep;
Watch ye, and ward ye! with wind and tide,
Fitz-Walter hath won his Cornish bride.

IV.—THE STORM.

1840.

WAR, 'mid the ocean and the land!
The battle-field, Morwenna's strand,
Where rock and ridge the bulwark keep,
The giant-warders of the deep.

They come! and shall they not prevail,
The seething surge, the gathering gale?
They fling their wild flag to the breeze,
The banner of a thousand seas.

They come—they mount—they charge in vain,
Thus far, incalculable main!
No more! thine hosts have not o'erthrown
The lichen on the barrier stone.

Have the rocks faith, that thus they stand,
Unmoved, a grim and stately band,
And look, like warriors tried and brave,
Stern, silent, reckless, o'er the wave?

Have the proud billows thought and life,
To feel the glory of the strife;
And trust, one day, in battle bold,
To win the foeman's haughty hold?

Mark where they writhe with pride and shame,
Fierce valour, and the zeal of fame!
Hear how their din of madness raves,
The baffled army of the waves!

Thy way, O God, is in the sea,
Thy paths, where awful waters be;
Thy Spirit thrills the conscious stone:
O Lord, Thy footsteps are not known!

V.—THE DOOM-WELL OF ST. MADRON.

1851.

"PLUNGE thy right hand in St. Madron's spring,
If true to its troth be the palm you bring:
But if a false sigil thy fingers bear,
Lay them the rather on the burning share."

Loud laughed King Arthur when-as he heard
That solemn friar his boding word:
And blithely he sware as a king he may,
"We tryst for St. Madron's at break of day."

"Now horse and hattock, both but and ben,"
Was the cry at Lauds, with Dundagel men;
And forth they pricked upon Routorr side,
As goodly a raid as a king could ride.

Proud Gwennivar rode like a queen of the land,
With page and with squire at her bridle hand;
And the twice six knights of the stony ring,
They girded and guarded their Cornish king.

Then they halted their steeds at St. Madron's cell:
And they stood by the monk of the cloistered well;
"Now off with your gauntlets," King Arthur he cried,
"And glory or shame for our Tamar side."

'Twere sooth to sing how Sir Gauvain smiled,
When he grasped the waters so soft and mild;
How Sir Lancelot dashed the glistening spray
O'er the rugged beard of the rough Sir Kay.

Sir Bevis he touched and he found no fear:
'Twas a *bénitée* stoup to Sir Belvidere,
How the fountain flashed o'er King Arthur's Queen
Say, Cornish dames, for ye guess the scene.

"Now rede me my riddle, Sir Mordred, I pray,
My kinsman, mine ancient, my *bien-aimé*;
Now rede me my riddle, and rede it aright,
Art thou traitorous knave or my trusty knight?"

He plunged his right arm in the judgment well,
It bubbled and boiled like a cauldron of hell:
He drew and he lifted his quivering limb,
Ha! Sir Judas, how Madron had sodden him.

Now let Uter Pendragon do what he can,
Still the Tamar river will run as it ran:
Let king or let kaiser be fond or be fell,
Ye may harowe their troth in St. Madron's well.

VI.—AURORA.

NOVEMBER 10, 1870.

SUNFALL, and yet no night! fire floods the earth!
A molten rainbow flakes the northern sky!
The Polar gates unclose! and, gleaming forth,
Troop the wild flames that glide and glare on high,
Tinged in their vaulted home with that deep ruddy dye!

Whence flash these mystic signals? what the scene
Where the red rivers find their founts of flame?
Far, far away, where icy bulwarks lean
Along the deep, in seas without a name:
Where the vast porch of Hades rears its giant frame!

The underworld of souls! severed in twain:
One, the fell North, perplexed and thick with gloom;
And one, the South, that calm and glad domain,
Where asphodel and lotus lightly bloom
'Neath God's own Starry Cross, the shield of peaceful doom.

No quest of man shall touch—no daring keel
Cleave the dark waters to their awful bourne;
None shall the living sepulchre reveal
Where separate souls must throng, and pause; and yearn
For their far dust, the signal, and their glad return.

Ay! ever and anon the gates roll wide,
When whole battalions yield their sudden breath;
And ghosts in armies gather as they glide,
Still fierce and vengeful, from the field of death
Lo! lightnings lead their hosts, and meteors glare beneath.

THE QUEST OF THE SANGRAAL.

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER.

HO! for the Sangraal! vanished vase of heaven!
That held, like Christ's own heart, an hin of blood!
Ho! for the Sangraal!—
How the merry shout,
Of reckless riders on the rushing steed,
Smote the loose echo from the drowsy rock
Of grim Dundagel: throned along the sea!
* * * * * * *

See! where they move, a battle-shouldering kind!
Massive in mould, but graceful: thorough men:
Built in the mystic measure of the Cross:—
Their lifted arms the Transome: and their bulk,
The Tree, where Jesu stately stood to die!
Thence came their mastery in the field of war:—
Ha! one might drive battalions—one alone!

See now, they pause; for in their midst, the King
Arthur, the Son of Uter, and the Night.
Helmed with Pendragon: with the crested Crown:
And belted, with the sheathed Excalibur,
That gnashed his iron teeth, and yearned for war!
Stern was that look: high natures seldom smile:
And in those pulses beat a thousand kings.
A glance! and they were hushed: a lifted hand,—
And his eye ruled them like a throne of light!
Then, with a voice that rang along the moor—
Like the Archangel's trumpet for the dead—
He spake—while Tamar sounded to the sea.

"Comrades in arms! mates of the table round
Fair Sirs, my fellows in the bannered ring,—
Ours is the lofty tryst! this day we meet,
Not under shield, with scarf and knightly gage,

To quench our thirst of love in ladies' eyes:
We shall not mount to-day that goodly throne,
The conscious steed, with thunder in his loins,
To launch along the field the arrowy spear:—
Nay, but a holier theme, a mightier quest—
'Ho! for the Sangraal, vanished vase of God!'

"Ye know that in old days, that yellow Jew,
Accursèd Herod; and the earth-wide judge,
Pilate the Roman: doomster for all lands—
Or else the Judgment had not been for all,—
Bound Jesu-Master to the world's tall tree,
Slowly to die.—

"Ha! Sirs, had we been there,
They durst not have assayed their felon deed,—
Excalibur had cleft them to the spine!—
Slowly He died, a world in every pang,
Until the hard centurion's cruel spear
Smote His high heart: and from that severed side,
Rushed the red stream that quenched the wrath of Heaven!

"Then came Sir Joseph, hight of Arimathèe,
Bearing that awful vase the Sangraal!
The vessel of the Pasch, Shere Thursday night:
The selfsame Cup, wherein the faithful Wine
Heard God, and was obedient unto Blood!
Therewith he knelt and gatherèd blessèd drops
From his dear Master's Side that sadly fell,
The ruddy dews from the great tree of life:
Sweet Lord! what treasures! like the priceless gems
Hid in the tawny casket of a king,—
A ransom for an army, one by one!
That wealth he cherished long: his very soul
Around his ark: bent as before a shrine!

"He dwelt in Orient Syria: God's own land:
The ladder foot of heaven—where shadowy shapes
In white apparel glided up and down!
His home was like a garner, full of corn
And wine and oil; a granary of God!
Young men, that no one knew, went in and out,
With a far look in their eternal eyes!
All things were strange and rare: the Sangraal,
As though it clung to some ethereal chain,
Brought down high Heaven to earth at Arimathèe!

"He lived long centuries! and prophesied.
A girded pilgrim ever and anon:
Cross-staff in hand, and folded at his side,
The mystic marvel of the feast of blood!
Once, in old time, he stood in this dear land,
Enthralled:—for lo! a sign! his grounded staff
Took root, and branched, and bloomed, like Aaron's rod:
Thence came the shrine, the cell; therefore he dwelt,
The vassal of the vase, at Avalon!

"This could not last, for evil days came on,
And evil men: the garbage of their sin
Tainted this land, and all things holy fled.
The Sangraal was not: on a summer eve,
The silence of the sky brake up in sound!
The tree of Joseph glowed with ruddy light:
A harmless fire, curved like a molten vase,
Around the bush, and from the midst, a voice:
Thus hewn by Merlin on a runic stone:—
Ririoth : el : Zannah : aulohee : pedàh :

"Then said the shuddering seer—he heard and knew
The unutterable words that glide in Heaven,
Without a breath or tongue, from soul to soul—

"The land is lonely now: Anathema:
The link that bound it to the silent grasp
Of thrilling worlds is gathered up and gone:
The glory is departed; and the disk
So full of radiance from the touch of God!
This orb is darkened to the distant watch
Of Saturn and his reapers, when they pause,
Amid their sheaves, to count the nightly stars.

"All gone! but not for ever: on a day
There shall arise a king from Keltic loins,
Of mystic birth and name, tender and true;
His vassals shall be noble, to a man:
Knights strong in battle till the war is won:
Then while the land is hushed on Tamar side,
So that the warder upon Carradon
Shall hear at once the river and the sea—
That king shall call a Quest: a kindling cry:
'Ho! for the Sangraal! vanished vase of God!'

"Yea! and it shall be won! a chosen knight,
The ninth from Joseph in the line of blood,
Clean as a maid from guile and fleshly sin—
He with the shield of Sarras; and the lance,
Ruddy and moistened with a freshening stain,
As from a severed wound of yesterday—
He shall achieve the Graal: he alone!

"Thus wrote Bard Merlin on the Runic hide
Of a slain deer: rolled in an aumry chest.
"And now, fair Sirs, your voices: who will gird
His belt for travel in the perilous ways?
This thing must be fulfilled:—in vain our land
Of noble name, high deed, and famous men;
Vain the proud homage of our thrall, the sea,
If we be shorn of God:—ah! loathsome shame!

To hurl in battle for the pride of arms:
To ride in native tournay, foreign war:
To count the stars; to ponder pictured runes:—
And grasp great knowledge, as the demons do—
If we be shorn of God: we must assay
The myth and meaning of this marvellous bowl:
It shall be sought and found":—
Thus said the King

Then rose a storm of voices; like the sea,
When Ocean, bounding, shouts with all his waves!
High-hearted men: the purpose and the theme,
Smote the fine chord that thrills the warrior's soul
With touch and impulse for a deed of fame.
Then spake Sir Gauvain, counsellor of the King—
A man of Pentecost for words that burn:—

"Sirs! we are soldiers of the rock and ring:
Our table-round is earth's most honoured stone;
Thereon two worlds of life and glory blend!
The boss upon the shield of many a land:
The midway link with light beyond the stars!
This is our fount of fame; let us arise,
And cleave the earth like rivers: like the streams
That win from Paradise their immortal name:
To the four winds of God! casting the lot.

"So shall we share the regions! and unfold
The shrouded mystery of those fields of air.

"Eastward! the source and spring of life and light!
Thence came, and thither went, the rush of worlds,
When the great cone of space was sown with stars!
There rolled the gateway of the double dawn,
When the mere God shone down a breathing man
There, up from Bethany, the Syrian Twelve

Watched their dear Master darken into day!
Thence, too, will gleam the Cross, the arisen wood:
Ah, shuddering sign one day of terrible doom!
Therefore the Orient is the home of God.

The West! a Galilee: the shore of men!
The symbol and the scene of populous life:
Full Japhet journeyed thither, Noe's son,
The prophecy of increase in his loins.
Westward Lord Jesu looked His latest love,—
His yearning Cross along the peopled sea,
The innumerable nations in His soul:
Thus came that type and token of our kind,
The realm and region of the set of sun,
The wide, wide West: the imaged zone of man.

"The North! the lair of demons, where they coil,
And bound, and glide, and travel to and fro:
Their gulph, the underwold, this hollow orb,
Where vaulted columns curve beneath the hills
And shoulder us on their arches: there they throng;
The portal of their pit, the polar gate;
Their fiery dungeon mocked with northern snow:
Their doom and demon haunt a native land,
Where dreamy thunder mutters in the cloud,
Storm broods, and battle breathes, and baleful fires
Shed a fierce horror o'er the shuddering North!

"But thou! O South Wind, breathe thy fragrant sigh:
We follow on thy perfume, breath of heaven!
Myriads, in girded albs, for ever young,
Their stately semblance of embodied air,
Troop round the footstool of the Southern Cross—
That pentacle of stars: the very sign
That led the Wise Men towards the Awful Child,
Then came and stood to rule the peaceful sea!

So, too, Lord Jesu from His mighty tomb
Cast the dear shadow of His red right hand,
To soothe the happy South: the Angels' home!

"Then let us search the regions, one by one,
And pluck this Sangraal from its cloudy cave!"

So Merlin brought the arrows: graven lots,
Shrouded from sight within a quivered sheath,
For choice and guidance in the perilous path,
That so the travellers might divide the lands.
They met at Lauds, in good Saint Nectan's cell,
For fast, and vigil, and their knightly vow:
Then knelt, and prayed, and all received their God.

"Now for the silvery arrows, grasp and hold!"

Sir Lancelot drew the North: that fell domain,
Where fleshly man must brook the airy fiend—
His battle-foe, the demon: ghastly war!
Ho! stout Saint Michael shield them, knight and knave!

The South fell softly to Sir Percival's hand:
Some shadowy Angel breathed a silent sign:
That so that blameless man, that courteous knight,
Might mount and mingle with the happy host
Of God's white army in their native land!
Yea, they shall woo and soothe him, like the dove.
But hark! the greeting! "Tristan for the West!"

Among the multitudes, his watchful way:
The billowy hordes beside the seething sea;
But will the glory gleam in loathsome lands?
Will the lost pearl shine out among the swine?
Woe, father Adam, to thy loins and thee.

Sir Galahad holds the Orient arrow's name:
His chosen hand unbars the gate of day!
There glows that heart, filled with his mother's blood
That rules in every pulse, the world of man;
Link of the awful Three, with many a star.
O! blessèd East! 'mid visions such as thine,
'Twere well to grasp the Sangraal, and die.

Now feast and festival in Arthur's hall:
Hark! stern Dundagel softens into song!
They meet for solemn severance, knight and king:
Where gate and bulwark darken o'er the sea.
Strong men for meat, and warriors at the wine:
They wreak the wrath of hunger on the beeves,—
They rend rich morsels from the savoury deer,—
And quench the flagon like Brun-guillie dew!
Hear! how the minstrels prophesy in sound.
Shout the King's Waes-hael, and Drink-hael the Queen!

* * * * * * *

Thomas Wade.

1805—1875.

Of the early part of Thomas Wade's history little is on record beyond the fact that he was born in 1805. While he was passing through his boyhood, the dominant poetic spirits were Byron and Scott. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, and Moore were all far too prominent to be overlooked by any lover of poetry; and Shelley and Keats about as little appreciated as any two great poets ever were during their lifetime. Yet it is of Shelley and Keats, rather than any of the others, that the serious influence is to be traced in Wade's first known poems, though there are signs of his having in very early days committed "flirtation with the muse of Moore." At what age he began the serious composition of verse it is not easy to say. His first volume was reviewed in *The Examiner* and *The Literary Gazette* in the middle of January 1825; and, as the poems issued in that volume differ considerably in degree of immaturity, it seems probable that he was at work on poetry by the time he was eighteen years old. The title of this prentice work, dated 1825, is "Tasso and the Sisters: Tasso's Spirit: The Nuptials of Juno: The Skeletons: The Spirits of the Ocean. Poems, by Thomas Wade." The first two poems are dramatic scenes, written with much feeling and aptitude; the last two are more juvenile in treat-

ment. "The Nuptials of Juno," the strongest of the series, is a narrative poem, mainly in octave stanzas —written, doubtless, by one whose mind had been steeped in Shelley's translation of the Hymn to Mercury, published the year before in the "Posthumous Poems," and Keats's "Isabella," published in 1820. But although the mythological narrative was the poem in which the boy of nineteen or twenty came nearest, in passages, to the attainment of excellence, it was the dramatic strain of the Tasso sketches that was destined to be first developed as a serious means of appealing to the public. Wade's poetic drama, "Woman's Love; or, The Triumph of Patience," an ambitious work enough, was fortunate in the circumstances of its first presentation, the leading part having been played by Charles Kemble, to whom the published play is dedicated. The story of the patient Griselda, selected by the young playwright, was not a very propitious one; and yet, though the critics were divided, the play was a distinct success. Wade speaks of it in the preface as his "first essay as a dramatist"; but it may be doubted whether he meant to imply that he had written no other play or only that this was the first publicly produced. It was on the 17th of December 1828 that "Woman's Love" was first performed at Covent Garden; and in the following year two editions of it were published. Wade's next venture was a farce in two acts, entitled "The Phrenologists." This was first performed on the 12th of January 1830, also at Covent Garden. Blanchard, Bartley, Robert Keeley, and Mrs. Keeley took part in a successful production of this somewhat slight work. Though not very witty or very

humorous, the farce is bright and racy. Somewhat broad in allusion, it was susceptible, no doubt, of considerable drollery in representation; but it is not fascinating as a book—for book it certainly is, though of such rarity that it was for years introuvable. It was published in 1830, as was Wade's third and last dramatic appeal to the public, "The Jew of Arragon; or, The Hebrew Queen." At this time Wade saw a good deal of Charles Kemble and his daughters, and was a great favourite in the Kemble household. This circumstance appears to have combined with the success of his poetic drama and farce to fan his desire for a higher conquest; and the result was the tragedy of "The Jew of Arragon." This work, still more ambitious than "Woman's Love," appeared at Covent Garden on the 20th of October 1830, with Kemble and his daughter Fanny in the leading parts. Mrs. Kemble had predicted that the English public would never stand a dramatic attempt to make the Jews heroic at the expense of the Christians: such is the motive of Wade's really fine play, and its fate was that predicted. Xavier the Jew and his daughter Rachel, successful in an attempt to exalt the Hebrew race in Arragon and dominate King Alphonso, are not characters calculated to enlist the sympathy of such an audience as the British public could yield in 1830; and the revolt of the Spanish subjects, the massacre of the Jews of Arragon, and suicide of Xavier and Rachel in circumstances of much heroism, showed too strong a bias towards the Jews for the temper of the gallery. The tragedy was howled off the stage; but Wade's own temper was not that of a man easily defeated. He proceeded to publish his play with a preface

speaking frankly of its motive and its failure, a dedication to the Jews of England, and a spirited attack on the Deputy Licenser, who had struck out several passages; and he even took care to emphasize the said passages by printing them in capitals. Writing of him in March 1831 as "our young unsuccessful playwright," Fanny Kemble recorded that "he took his damnation as bravely as Capaneo."

It would be interesting to know whether two unpublished plays by Wade were written after this failure or before it. One of them, "Elfrida," I have never seen; and I cannot ascertain that it still exists. Of the other, "King Henry II.," the final manuscript was given to me by Wade's widow, and is safely preserved. The full title is "The Life and Death of King Henry the Second. A Historical Tragedy: In Five Acts. (As it will be acted at the Royal Utopian Theatre.) By Thomas Wade: Author of 'Mundi et Cordis Carmina,' 'The Shadow-Seeker;' etc., etc., etc." This title-page was of course written after 1837, the date of "The Shadow-Seeker"; but the body of the manuscript, revised after being fairly copied, is written upon paper water-marked "1827," and in other ways conveys the impression that it was originally composed at about the same time as the other plays. It is a stronger work than either "Woman's Love" or "The Jew of Arragon"—written in complete allegiance to Elizabethan tradition, though not to be called imitative. The Rosamund Clifford theme is treated with power, dignity, and tenderness; and the play, while thoroughly poetical, would act well, and make as showy a spectacle as need be.

After the close of Wade's short career as a dramatist, he became a frequent contributor of poems to *The Monthly Repository* and other periodicals; and it was not long before he was in the way of being a prosperous journalist. In 1835 he issued a handsome volume of his fugitive and then unpublished poems. This book, on which almost alone the limited fame of Wade to-day depends, was not fortunately named. "Mundi et Cordis: de Rebus Sempiternis et Temporariis: Carmina," is a title which, poetical and suggestive as it is, people will not take the trouble to apprehend. Even the short title, "Mundi et Cordis Carmina," is better for English ears in its English equivalent; and Wade must have felt this when he mentioned it in subsequent works as "Songs of the Universe and of the Heart." The book never went to a second edition; and yet it must be regarded as having been a literary success, for it was well noticed by the press, and gained for its author many friends and sympathizers among the intellectual of the day. It was this work which led to a friendship between Wade and his future wife. Lucy Eager, the daughter of a musician, had entered the musical profession at fifteen years of age; and in 1835, as Mrs. Bridgman, she was a well-known pianist. Wade's great love for music is apparent in his poems; and his friendship with the Bridgmans ripened quickly. Mr. Bridgman died not long after this time; and his widow became Wade's wife.

"The Contention of Death and Love" (1837) was Wade's next poetic venture. It was an anonymous pamphlet of sixteen pages, delineating the struggle between death and love over the sick-bed of a poet.

The metre is based on that of Shelley's "Lines written among the Euganean Hills." In issuing the companion pamphlet, "Helena," also dated 1837, Wade acknowledged the previous one, and explained that these and other poems were intended to form a volume, which he hoped gradually to complete, as a companion volume to "Mundi et Cordis Carmina." The unhappy heroine of "Helena" combines curiously certain characteristics of Isabella, in Keats's poem of that name, and the lady in "The Sensitive Plant" of Shelley—Keats's influence predominating this time over that of Shelley, notwithstanding the marked ideality of the poem. "The Shadow-Seeker" followed "Helena" in the same year (1837), and was, as I gather from an entry in Wade's writing on my copy of the pamphlet, intended to be classed with that section of the "Carmina" called "Mundi Templum." The last of the series, "Prothanasia and other Poems" (1839), is similarly marked as belonging to the section entitled "Adyta Cordis." "Prothanasia" is very remarkable. Written in blank verse studied after "Alastor," and betraying in other respects the influence of that poem, it depicts with much originality of thought a beautiful young woman, who, borne away by the doctrines of an eloquent and powerful-minded man, destroys herself to avoid experiencing the decay of youth and beauty. The encouragement necessary for the completion of Wade's projected "companion volume" seems to have failed, for the work ends at page 72.

It must have been at about this time that Wade was editor and part proprietor of *Bell's Weekly Messenger*. In consequence of financial difficulties

and a disagreement with his partner, he allowed himself to be bought out of the undertaking; and, abandoning London literary life, he retired to Jersey, where he and Mrs. Wade resided till his death—he for many years editing *The British Press*, and so helping to raise the tone of provincial journalism, and she in great esteem as a teacher of the pianoforte. His last independent publication, as far as I can learn, was a lecture entitled "What does Hamlet mean?" This, after being delivered to the Jersey Mechanics' Institute, was printed at the office of *The British Press* and dedicated to the memory of the author's friend George Toynbee.

But though Wade abandoned thus early the publication of books, he did not desist from poetry. His unpublished manuscripts include a series of sonnets to his wife and child, perhaps almost too intimate for present publication, but certainly among the most beautiful of his writings—thoughtful, tender, original, and strong. He contributed to *The National* of his brother-in-law, W. J. Linton, *The Illuminated Magazine*, and *The People's Journal*; and to collect all his fugitive work would not be easy. From the summer of 1845 to that of 1846 he found congenial occupation in translating the "Inferno" of Dante in terza-rima without the dissyllabic rhyme. This version, which remains in manuscript, combines in a remarkable degree fidelity to the sense of the original, vigorous individuality of diction, and fine metric qualities. At a later period he produced an essay in biblical criticism, entitled "What the Pentateuch (the Five Books) of Moses, and the Book of Joshua, teach Us to believe. By a Zulu. (Authorized Translation)." This also

remains in manuscript. Among his unpublished poems and sonnets I find none of later date than 1871, although it was not until the autumn of 1875 that he died.

In matters of religion and social theory Wade was of the advanced liberal school. Not dominated by any one theorist, he was unusually impressionable when his reading brought him in contact with noteworthy thought, distinction in artistic method, or even striking forms of expression. The works of Shelley go for much in accounting for the line of his thought and the spirit of his art; and, considering the abundant wealth of expression which he could command, it is strange that he should have chosen to be as much beholden to another poet as he certainly is to Shelley. The influences traceable in his work are in the main literary; and yet, when he draws straight from nature and experience, he is keen of eye and steady of hand. In drama he must be classed as an idealist: his work in this direction is excellent rather than great; it lies within the shadow of the towering genius of Marlowe; and, after all, the imputation of working under the shadow of Marlowe and Shelley might have been far from ungrateful to the ambition of Thomas Wade.

H. Buxton Forman.

MUNDI ET CORDIS CARMINA.

THOMAS WADE.

I.

MUNDI TEMPLUM.

POEMS.

(III.)

I.—THE COMING OF NIGHT.

NIGHT in the east, like to a shrouded nun,
Comes pacing, slow and melancholy, forth,
With all her mystical austerity,
Dark'ning the hills and billows; but the west
Still holds fair Day, who, like a dying saint,
Gleams with a holy joy in her last hour,
Mantled in gold and azure; and two stars
That on her lessening boundary hang in light,
Seem angels minist'ring to her last breath
Some heavenly consolation. Like death on life,
The pall of Night spreads ever on the track
Of fading Daylight, till the west, as east,
Is darkness. Lo! the stars, Day's funeral lamps,
Hang thick and clustering in the vault of Heaven,
Mirror'd along the ocean, which peals forth
A requiem to the sun; whilst those two orbs
That leant above the death-bed of the Day
Set, as in righteous sorrow, leaving Night
To all the wide inheritance of Heaven.
She wears her milky girdle o'er her robe
Starrily spangled; and upon the cliffs
And complication of the circling hills,
The wave-swept shore, and all the amplitude
Of air and sea, broodeth in starry vastness.

(VI.)

II.—THE WINTER SHORE.

JANUARY, 1830.

A MIGHTY change it is, and ominous
Of mightier, sleeping in Eternity.
The bare cliffs seem half-sinking in the sand,
Heaved high by winter seas; and their white crowns,
Struck by the whirlwinds, shed their hair-like snow
Upon the desolate air. Sullen and black,
Their huge backs rearing far along the waves,
The rocks lie barrenly, which there have lain,
Reveal'd, or hidden, from immemorial time;
And o'er them hangs a sea-weed drapery,
Like some old Triton's hair, beneath which lurk
Myriads of crowned shell-fish, things whose life,
Like a cell'd hermit's, seemeth profitless.
Vast slimy masses harden'd into stone
Rise smoothly from the surface of the Deep,
Each with a hundred thousand fairy cells
Perforate, like a honeycomb, and, cup-like,
Fill'd with the sea's salt crystal—the soft beds
Once of so many pebbles, thence divorced
By the continual waters, as they grew
Slowly to rock. The bleak shore is o'erspread
With sea-weeds green and sere, curl'd and dishevell'd,
As they were mermaids' tresses, wildly torn
For some sea-sorrow. The small mountain-stream,
Swoln to a river, laves the quivering beach,
And flows in many channels to the sea
Between high shingly banks, that shake for ever.
The solitary sea-bird, like a spirit,
Balanced in air upon his crescent wings,

Hangs floating in the winds, as he were lord
Of the drear vastness round him, and alone
Natured for such dominion. Spring and Summer
And stored Autumn, of their liveries
Here is no vestige; Winter, tempest-robed,
In gloomy grandeur o'er the hills and seas
Reigneth omnipotent.

(XIV.)

III.—THE COPSE.

TO ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE.

NOR step, nor speech of human thing is near;
But many-winged creatures, round me flying,
Make the incessant airs one voice appear
From Being's infinite heart! Upon the dying
Trunk of this mossy fruit tree, old and sere,
And half-uprooted, toward the green slope lying,
Will I recline; and fold me in a trance
Of meditation with the bard of France.

Away! thou art too wild for this calm dell;
Anon, I'll ponder with thee by the foam.
A bridal music, not a burial knell,
Must echo here: within this leafy dome
Soft-gushing melodies high o'er me swell
From two enamour'd birds, to shadow come
To bless each other with a summer song,
Whilst yet the earth is green and daylight long.

O, god Apollo! there be million pleasures
Which thine eternal lyre can ne'er express
That warble in these winged poets' measures,
Full flowing from their little hearts' excess!
I know not what may be thy rhymed treasures
That have been lost in old Time's wilderness;

But well I weet that never human lips
Breath'd love to love with sweeter soul-eclipse!

They chant, till their own exquisite melodies
  Entrance them into silence, and they flit
Mutely among the leaves: the gleaming flies,
  Whose wings are rainbows, as with ether lit,
Around me wheel with stirring harmonies
  That ne'er from dawn to twilight intermit;
And deep in yon green cave a veiled stream
Murmurs like thoughts of Heaven in a dream.

Alphonse de Lamartine! Come hither, hither—
  Furling thy sullen spirit's eagle pinion,
As mine is furl'd; and let us weave together
  A sunny song of panting Love's dominion
Over the Universe! let us wear ether
  Unclouded in our hearts, leaving the minion
Of common life to strive with common sorrow,
And with our lyres assert the joy of Heaven's morrow!

"I am here! but not rejoicing
  With thine idle gladness;
From the music round us voicing
  I but gather sadness:
Thou sittest on a tree uprooted,
Which shall no more be leav'd or fruited;
Those minstrel birds, the bird of prey,
Or winter and its want, shall slay;
Those insects are each other's slaughter;
And the sweet music of the water,
Yon emerald cavern's mystic river,
The falling earth strikes dumb for ever."
I would reply; but—hark to that pure strain!—
Those wiser bards sing in the boughs again!

(XXVIII.)

IV.—THE NET-BRAIDERS.

WITHIN a low-thatched hut, built in a lane,
Whose narrow pathway tendeth toward the ocean—
A solitude, which, save of some rude swain
Or fisherman, doth scarce know human motion;
Or of some silent poet, to the main
Straying, to offer infinite devotion
To God, in the free universe—there dwelt
Two women old, to whom small store was dealt

Of the world's mis-named good; mother and child,
Both aged and mateless. These two life sustain'd
By braiding fishing-nets; and so beguiled
Time and their cares, and little e'er complain'd
Of Fate or Providence: resign'd and mild,
Whilst day by day, for years, their hour-glass rain'd
Its trickling sand, to track the wing of time,
They toil'd in peace; and much there was sublime

In their obscure contentment: of mankind
They little knew, or reck'd; but for their being
They blessed their Maker, with a simple mind;
And in the constant gaze of his all-seeing
Eye, to his poorest creatures never blind,
Deeming they dwelt, they bore their sorrows fleeing,
Glad still to live, but not afraid to die,
In calm expectance of Eternity.

And since I first did greet those braiders poor,
If ever I behold fair women's cheeks
Sin-pale in stately mansions, where the door
Is shut to all but pride, my cleft heart seeks

For refuge in my thoughts, which then explore
That pathway lone near which the wild sea breaks,
And to Imagination's humble eyes
That hut, with all its want, is Paradise!

(xxxv.)

V.—THE STATUE.

I.

SHE lieth bare, in unveil'd loveliness,
Yet nothing naked; for the perfect charm
Of beauty and of symmetry doth dress
Her figure in a raiment bright and warm—
A garb most spiritual, which doth repress
The sensual eye of sense: with one fair arm
She leaneth on a pillow, softly sinking,
And her sweet face upturns, to some voluptuous thinking

II.

The other, bending with a rainbow grace,
Plays with the hindmost tresses of her hair,
Over her shoulder—Oh! that love-toned face!
It beams a passionate pleasure on the air,
And makes us crave some silent dwelling-place,
To gaze and live on it for ever there!
A love-thought stirs her mouth; and o'er her eyes
Appears the memory of a thousand sighs.

III.

Her rich-swell'd bosom, toward her white couch turn'd,
Spell-takes the eye-lids, and her limbs, extended
In animate perfection, are discern'd,
In all the harmony of structure blended,
Pressing each other's beauty, there hath burn'd
A dream of fire about her, which hath ended;
And now she looks reposing from that vision,
And from love's dream to love inviting soft transition.

SONNETS.

(IV.)

VI.—THE PRESENT.

AS one, a steep and slippery cliff ascending,
Pauses midway, and dares not farther climb;
But a reverting gaze beneath him bending,
Greets terror in the downward course sublime;
And 'twixt the crags above and rocks below
Quails: so, between the depths of all we know,
And the veil'd Future's unattained summit,
Despond we, till our fears around us throw
A murkier shade than death's; and all the glow
Of fancy's star-fires would in vain illume it:
But, ever and anon, Love's moon-like beaming
With a religious beauty o'er us streaming,
Nor ghost of Past, nor dream of Future riseth—
But the sweet Present all in all sufficeth.

(V.)

VII.—THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE.

WAR lay by Love: his sanguine limbs her whiteness
Bound, as might wreaths of coral ivory;
His sun-burnt cheeks from her ethereal brightness
Gather'd a gentle glory; whilst a die
Of shadow from his brow her fair embrown'd,
And fell like twilight on the day profound
Of her warm eyes: then, lull'd in purple splendour,
She tamed his fierceness with her kisses tender;
And in the folding of her delicate arms
Beguiling him to savage deeds' disuse,
By the full prevalence of yielding charms
She won for long-lorn Peace a live-long truce;
Girding with moonlight hope her cloud of fears—
And half-redeem'd the world from blood and tears.

(IX.)

VIII.—TO THREE SKULLS.

STILL grinning? ye grim frames of vacant bone!
Still staring at me from your sockets blank!
Your noses, bitten by the grave's black frost,
Still sneering hideously? and your lean jaws lank,
Jagg'd with those gumless teeth, still horribly
Mocking the porch of lips?—Ye do accost
My waking with a warning thunder-tone;
And in your looks I read the certainty
Of something that's eternal—death, or life—
For ye with either argument are rife.
I have had horrid dreams; and ye are blest
That no more welter with such fiery rain—
Curse on your empty heads! that are at rest,
Whilst tortures now are ringing through my brain!

(XVI.)

IX.—MINDS AND THE UNIVERSE.

THERE must be mighty pantings of free thought,
Cravings profound for liberty and love
And sublime ponderings on life and death,
In all the spirits that fill mortal forms!
I cannot yet believe the human swarms
Hived on the earth, are the mere things of breath,
Instinct and form, custom, and slavery
To what their fellows damn, or may approve,
Which still they seem: the mystery round them wrought
The source and flow of things, the Eternity
From whence they issued and to which they tend,
Must draw their souls unto their utmost bend
And turn them from life's daily littleness;
Or reason is an ape, and spirit spiritless!

(XVIII.)

X.—THE LIFE ETERNAL.

WE have two lives. The one, is but a cheat:
A thing of mere convention, which we bear
As minions of that Congregate Deceit,
Society—sole hope of many men!
The tiny parts of one great counterfeit.
The other, fountain'd in Eternity,
Eternal is; and toward Eternity
Flows constant; self-impelling and sublime:
It recogniseth neither Space nor Time;
Contain'd not, but containing; in itself
Folding the Universe; creating all,
Of nought created; sole, and self-sustain'd!
An all-perpetual, undiscerned glory,
To which this Visible Round is darkly transitory!

(XXI.)

XI.—AN EXHORTATION TO MANKIND.

WHEN will it be that men shall kinder grow
In human intercourse; and not thus, savagely,
Spring upon each occasion to o'erthrow
Their fellow-travellers through mortality?
God hath apportion'd us enough of woe
In this brief journey; from within derived,
And from the elements, in which we sicken,
Grow weak and die: let not man be deprived
By man of that poor solace which doth quicken
The flagging heart and the o'erlabour'd brain,
And temper to endurance, when self-stricken,
Or time and storm-worn. Transient thing! refrain!
Sting not thy brother insect, till he perish:
A life brief as thine own, vex not; but cherish.

(xxv.)

XII.—OF POETS.

OH! do not envy Poets the poor breath
Of praise which urgeth on their sail of life
Along the troubled waters of the world;
Nor the rich power by which they twine the wreath
Of fame which crowns them when that sail is furl'd
In the calm haven of the breathless grave:
Bitter and strong and manifold the strife
Which shakes them on that voyage; every wave
Of feeling dashes o'er their weltering heart;
And all the thunder and the flash of thought
Vollies and lightens round their fitful brain;
And their high power, by which the world is wrought
To mightiest sympathies, is grasp'd in pain,
Shower'd from the bosom-tempests they impart.

(xxxvii.)

XIII.—"MY TABLETS, HO!"

TIME passeth o'er me like a silent cloud;
My gaze reverteth, but 'tis gone, dissolved
Into vacuity, or dim-involved
With the undiscerned winds! Oh! Infancy,
Where be thine eyes, floating in delicate blue?
Oh! Childhood, where thy heart-high prophecy
Of dream-fulfilling bliss? Oh! Beauty's hue,
Where be thy balmy youth? Oh! Manhood proud,
Where thy stout sinews? Age, oh! where thy breath?
All blended in the infinite of Death!
Therefore, away! base heed of appetite;
And, love! be pastime for a wanton hour:
Out of this darkness must I kindle light,
And the all-powerful Shadow overpower.

II.

ADYTA CORDIS.

(v.)

XIV.—THE CREED.

I DO believe in Heaven;
'Tis written in those orbs of seeing:
A perfect creed is given
By those celestial lights, of an eternal being!

There's sweetness in the flowers
And hues with glowing beauty rife;
But in those eyes of yours
Floats a diviner grace, that speaks eternal life.

Within the stars is glory,
And evidence of Heaven and God;
But the "Hereafter" story
Burns with intenser truth in that twin-sphered abode.

Yet will my creed confound me;
Its oracles are too divine:
The light they pour around me
Distracts me from the god; I but adore the shrine

As you in Heaven believe,
Veil them! they are too richly clear:
Veil! and my faith reprieve—
Their light hath too much love for burning sense to bear!

(xv.)

XV.—THE HEART-THIRST.

I THIRST for thy beauty, Dear!—
Sweet thirst in my spirit alway!
Of the flowers of my heart-spring, Dear
The dew and the morning-ray.

Again to hear thee speak, Dear!
Were to wake in the music of Heaven,
When the death-sleep is taken away, Dear!
And the life that sleeps never is given.

Again the sight of thy smile, Dear!
Were a glance of the light of a star
Which ruleth the date of our life, Dear!
With a power that is near whilst afar.

Again to see thee move, Dear!
Were to gaze on all visions of grace
Which the great bards sow thick in our air, Dear!
And our thoughts in their silence embrace.

Again for our hands to clasp, Dear!
For the blood in their lips to converse,
Were a touch of that mystic power, Dear!
Which kindled the Universe.

I thirst, I die for thy presence, Dear!
Pure thought in my spirit alway!
Of the bounding streams of my soul, Dear!
The sunlight on every spray!

(XXIV.)

XVI.—THE WOOD.

WHY, here we are alone: the dark trees wave
Their fingery branches in the ceaseless wind;
And grass and moss the tangled pathway pave,
Where daisies lift their heads, in vestal guise,
And open their snow-white and pinky eyes
In beauty which the shadows of the wood
Too chastely cloister. Let me read the mind
Which gushes o'er thine aspect, like a flood,
And thence draw warranty. It is derived!
In that eye-glory is my passion shrived!
Our lips kiss quiveringly; again!—no more!—
Thy very life seems stifled in held breath,
And a dim shadow sweeps thine eyelids o'er—
A nearer greeting were delirious death!

(XLVIII.)

XVII.—THE TEAR.

THERE is a sweet salt in thy kisses, Dear!
That dwells upon the lips like ocean-foam
Dropp'd from the whirling airs: what wandering tear
Hath left the palace of its orbed home;
Straying from crystal, over wan carnation,
Unto thy rich mouth's curving almandine,
Where half its dew is minister'd to mine
In our fix'd greeting's balmy implication?
Be it the herald of a tempest shower,
Enclouded in the heaven of thy heart;
Or but a summer-drop, which the warm power
Of love doth to the air of sighs impart;
Like a true Bacchant will I drink it up,
Keeping my mad lips glued upon the cup!

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS.

THOMAS WADE.

I.—THE FACE.

THE "joy for ever" of a beauteous thing
Is effluent from its beauty's memory:
Itself and all its loveliness take wing,
And only fixèd in the thoughts they lie,
A worshipped, but unseen, Divinity,
Like God Himself! I never shall forget
That lucent face, but for a moment met:
Itself and all its loveliness must die
In death, or deathward life's maturity;
But, ever young and beauteous, in my dreaming
It shall contend for immortality,
Till o'er my dust the grass and flowers are teeming:
Nor perish then, if aught in this true page
May feed a dream thereof from age to age.

II.—THE FACE.

IT was a face that on the eyesight struck
Like the clear blue and starry arch of night,
When suddenly we quit a narrow chamber,
From the world's dust to teach our thoughts to clamber
To that invisible ether of delight
Which atmospheres the planets in their flight!
With lips, and brow, and eyelids that did pluck
The gaze from all the circling flash of faces,
And fix it on its beauties' combination;
So interflex'd, that, star by star, its graces
Were noted not; but still in constellation:
A harmony of grace, such as embraces
The innermost spirit with its concord fine,
But which sense cannot note by note define

III.—THE TRUE MARTYR.

THE Martyr worthiest of the bleeding name
Is he whose life a bloodless part fulfils;
Whom racks nor tortures tear, nor poniard kills,
Nor heat of bigots sacrificial flame:
But whose great soul can to herself proclaim
The fulness of the everlasting ills
With which all pain'd Creation writhes and thrills,
And yet pursue unblench'd her solemn aim;
Who works, all-knowing work's futility;
Creates, all-conscious of ubiquious death;
And hopes, believes, adores, while Destiny
Points from life's steep to all her graves beneath;
Whose Thought 'mid scorching woes is found apart—
Perfect amid the flames, like Cranmer's heart!

IV.—CORPOREAL AND MENTAL VISION.

EVEN as a man whose optics are diseased
Sees his own face within his closed eyes,
At the strange vision more disturb'd than pleased
My soul, o'erworn with fixing her clear thought
On the External, groweth self-inwrought,
And her own likeness views with pain'd surprise.
The eye that would keep sane, upon the green
And blue of earth and heaven must oftener rest
Than on the page of human lore, in quest
Of what the dead in life have felt and seen;
And, so, the soul that would have vision clear
Unto the end, must of herself be free;
Into Humanity's pure verdure peer,
And to the ether mount of Deity.

V.—THE STARLIGHT.

MY soul is steep'd in starlight! A great voice
Sounds thro' her depths from those eternal spheres;
Until immortal, self-existent, vast,
Herself decrees herself; and all apart
From dust, she broods on her own mysteries,
And pants and heaves for ever. Richly lies
The weight of holiest feeling on my heart,
And all sensation's depths are ,over cast
As with a mist steaming from unshed tears
Flamed on by thought. High motive to rejoice
In being a part of Things, from the Without
Comes to us, when the glories of the Arch
Thus congregate; and with triumphal shout,
The Hope within us urgeth its dread march.

VI.—BIRTH AND DEATH.

(From MS.)

1838.

METHINKS the soul within the body held
Is as a little babe within the womb,
Which flutters in its antenatal tomb,
But stirs and heaves the prison where 'tis cell'd,
And struggles in strange darkness, undispell'd
By all its strivings towards the breath and bloom
Of that aurorean being soon to come—
Strivings of feebleness, by nothing quell'd:
And even as birth to the enfranchised child,
Which shows to its sweet senses all the vast
Of beauty visible and audible,
Is death unto the spirit undefiled;
Setting it free of limit, and the past,
And all that in its prison-house befell.

Edward, Lord Lytton.

1805—1873.

Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer was born in 1805, his father being George William Earle Bulwer, of Wood Dalling, in the county of Norfolk. His mother inherited the estates of Richard Lytton, of Knebworth, in the county of Hampshire. At the age of fifteen he published "Ismael: An Oriental Tale, with other Poems;" and at twenty he won the Chancellor's medal at Cambridge with a poem on "Sculpture." He took his B.A. degree at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1826, and in the following year he published a tale in verse, after the manner of Lord Byron. He has left it on record that, when a young man, he wandered about for a time with a band of gipsies, and that he married a gipsy girl, after the manner of the gipsies, under the greenwood tree. His first novel "Falkland" was published in 1827, but was afterwards suppressed. In the same year he married Miss Rosina Wheeler, an Irish young lady, with whom he lived very unhappily. The pair separated, but their quarrels gave rise to ugly public disclosures and squabblings which, unfortunately, did not end with the death of Bulwer. He gained his first literary success with his novel "Pelham," in 1828. The book is in the main a tissue of flippancy and high-flown sentiment; yet there is wit enough in it to keep it alive, and it is certainly

far superior to the sombre and affected tales by which it was followed, viz., "Devereux," "The Disowned," "Eugene Aram," and "Paul Clifford." To the last-named story—the hero of which is a highwayman—was specially due the bitter ridicule with which Thackeray repeatedly assailed its author. Literature being insufficient to engross Bulwer's energies, he turned to politics, stood successfully as a Radical for the borough of St. Ives in 1831, and sat for Lincoln from 1832 to 1841. After a journey to Italy, the fruits whereof were "The Last Days of Pompeii" (1834), and "Rienzi" (1835), he set himself to win fame as a dramatist. His first piece, "The Duchess de la Vallière," failed—as it deserved to fail—in 1836, but his "Lady of Lyons" had a brilliant success in 1838, and still keeps possession of the stage. His other plays were, "Richelieu," "Not so Bad as we Seem," and "Money," a comedy, which was brought out in 1840, and which is, perhaps, his soundest piece of dramatic work. In 1838 he was made a baronet by Lord Melbourne. From 1841 to 1852 he had no seat in Parliament. In 1843 he succeeded to the Knebworth estates, and thereupon assumed his mother's name of Lytton. His wild, beautiful romance "Zanoni," one of the finest of all his works, appeared in 1842, and was followed by "The Last of the Barons" in 1843. "The New Timon," a satire on living men of note, issued in 1846, is now only of interest on account of the scathing retort which certain of its lines provoked from Tennyson. "King Arthur," a romantic epic, was published anonymously in 1848—only to fall dead from the press—and in 1849 its author entered on a new field of fiction in "The

Caxtons." In this book and in its sequel, "My Novel" (1853), scenes of contemporary English life are dealt with in a style adapted from Sterne. These stories are infinitely pleasanter reading than Lytton's gloomy tales of romantic criminals, and his heavy and magniloquent historical novels. In 1852 he was returned for Hertfordshire, and thenceforth sat as a Conservative. He was not an effective debater, but he could make an eloquent speech after elaborate preparation. From May 1858 to June 1859, he held the office of Colonial Secretary. His satire, "St. Stephen's," was published in 1860; his "Strange Story"—surely the maddest, dullest tale ever written by an author of ability—ran through *All the Year Round* in 1862; his "Lost Tales of Miletus"—a series of short stories in verse—appeared in 1866, and his translation of "Horace's Odes" in 1869. He worked with unabated energy almost to the very end of his days. His latest works show no falling off either in fertility of invention or in brilliance of execution. Two of his very best books were the fruits of his closing years—"Kenelm Chillingly," one of the cleverest and most amusing of all his novels, and "The Coming Race," an ingenious, fanciful tale of wonder, which none of its many imitators has equalled in felicity of design or in grace of workmanship. He died in January 1873. His life has been written at length by his son, known to poetic fame as Owen Meredith.

During his life he published some fifty works—working as a novelist, a dramatist, a historian (in his "Athens"), a critic (in "The Student"), a lyrist, and a would-be epic poet. No more versatile man of letters ever turned a sentence. But in

no field of literature did he achieve a commanding success. He left no masterpiece behind him. It is difficult nowadays to understand the favour with which many of his novels were greeted, the scenes are so oppressively gloomy, the characters so overdrawn, the dialogue is so stilted, the style so tediously laboured. He could not draw a woman—Cecilia Travers in "Kenelm Chillingly," perhaps, is his only successful heroine—while his heroes are in the main too melodramatic for the world outside the footlights. Yet he had great gifts as a writer of fiction. He could construct a good plot; he could write a bit of brilliant ornate description, and he could deal effectively with the supernatural. If "A Strange Story" is as mad as it is dismal, "The Haunters and the Haunted" is as weird a ghost story as ever was penned. Thackeray declared it so affected him that he was afraid to look over his shoulder as he read. And in "The Coming Race" there is genuine poetic beauty of imagination, though it is a beauty unequalled in any other of his works. In "Zanoni," and "My Novel," and "Kenelm Chillingly" he fell little short of producing novels of the first rank. But in no case is his work sealed with the seal of genius which gives perennial interest to a tale. His soundest prose was written in his latest years. The style of "The Coming Race" is at once simpler and more graceful than the style of his earlier works. The most popular of his dramas, "The Lady of Lyons," has been a favourite work with the most distinguished players, and is still found to be a good acting piece. The plot may be improbable, and the hero's conduct by no means above reproach, but the

dialogue, with all its tinsel, has at times the fine ring of passion, the situations are telling, and the action never flags.

Could perseverance, literary dexterity, scholarship, eloquence, and brilliant fancy suffice for the making of poetry, then had Lytton been a poet of the foremost rank. Things being otherwise, however, the ardent, confident pertinacity which enabled him to win in the end success as a dramatist and a speaker, failed to gain him a high place in the realm of lyric and narrative verse.

His lines have seldom the breath of poetic inspiration. Their brilliance is too often a hard brilliance, and their jewels are too often jewels of paste. "King Arthur" may have been the best epic of its year, but it is now as dead as the Arthurian lays of Sir Richard Blackmore. Yet Lytton professed to regard it as the crowning work of all his days: —"I am unalterably convinced," he wrote, "that on this foundation I rest the least perishable monument of those thoughts and those labours which have made the life of my life." The epic is written in stanzas, consisting each of a quatrain followed by a couplet, a form which is unsuited for a long narrative poem, and which in Lytton's hands soon becomes intolerably monotonous. The allegory is dim, the story uninteresting, and the characters are puppets. He was fairly successful with the ballad. The spirited lay which tells of "the soldier-march of Rou" swings along fierily, and his translations of Schiller's ballads are about as good as translations of such things can be. As a lyrist, he generally produced nothing better than rhymed rhetoric; and when he tried, as in the

scraps of verse scattered through "Kenelm Chillingly," to be simple and touching, and to catch the manner of the *Volkslied*, the result was failure. One true lyric he did write, one poem in which the sentiment is sweet and sincere, and in which the form is worthy of the sentiment; the lines entitled "Absent yet Present," and which commence thus:—

"As the flight of a river
That flows to the sea,
My soul rushes ever
In tumult to thee."

There and there only did Lytton rise into song.

WALTER WHYTE.

SONGS AND BALLADS.

EDWARD, LORD LYTTON.

I.—ABSENT YET PRESENT.

AS the flight of a river
That flows to the sea
My soul rushes ever
In tumult to thee.

A twofold existence
I am where thou art;
My heart in the distance
Beats close to thy heart.

Look up, I am near thee,
I gaze on thy face;
I see thee, I hear thee,
I feel thine embrace.

As a magnet's control on
The steel it draws to it,
Is the charm of thy soul on
The thoughts that pursue it.

And absence but brightens
The eyes that I miss,
And custom but heightens
The spell of thy kiss.

It is not from duty,
Though that may be owed,—
It is not from beauty,
Though that be bestow'd;

But all that I care for,
And all that I know,
Is that, without wherefore,
I worship thee so.

Through granite it breaketh
A tree to the ray,
As a dreamer forsaketh
The grief of the day,

My soul in its fever
Escapes unto thee;
O dream to the griever,
O light to the tree!

A twofold existence
I am where thou art;
Hark, hear in the distance
The beat of my heart!

II.—JEALOUSY.

I HAVE thy love—I know no fear
Of that divine possession;
Yet draw more close, and thou shalt hear
A jealous heart's confession.

I nurse no pang, lest fairer youth
Of loftier hopes should win thee;
There blows no wind to chill the truth,
Whose amaranth blooms within thee.

Unworthier thee if I could grow
(The love that lured thee perished),
Thy woman heart could ne'er forego
The earliest dream it cherished.

I do not think that doubt and love
Are one—whate'er they tell us;
Yet—nay—lift not thy looks above,
A star can make me jealous.

If thou art mine, all mine at last,
I covet so the treasure,
No glance that thou canst elsewhere cast,
But robs me of a pleasure.

I am so much a miser grown,
That I could wish to hide thee,
Where never breath but mine alone
Could drink delight beside thee.

Then say not, with that soothing air,
I have no rival nigh thee;
The sunbeam lingering in thy hair—
The breeze that trembles by thee—

The very herb beneath thy feet—
The rose whose odours woo thee—
In all things, rivals he must meet,
Who would be all things to thee!

If sunlight from the dial be
But for one moment banished,
Turn to the silenced plate and see
The hours themselves are vanished.

In aught that from me lures thine eyes,
My jealousy has trial;
The lightest cloud across the skies
Has darkness for the dial.

III.—THE ANGEL AND THE CHILD.

UPON a barren steep,
Above a stormy deep,
I saw an Angel watching the wild sea;
Earth was that barren steep,
Time was that stormy deep,
And the opposing shore—Eternity!

"Why dost thou watch the wave?
Thy feet the waters lave,
The tide engulfs thee if thou dost delay."
"Unscathed I watch the wave,
Time not the Angel's grave,
I wait until the ocean ebbs away."

Hush'd on the Angel's breast
I saw an Infant rest,
Smiling upon the gloomy hell below.
"What is the Infant press'd,
O Angel, to thy breast?"
The child God gave me, in The Long Ago.

"Mine all upon the earth,
The Angel's angel-birth,
Smiling each terror from the howling wild."
Never may I forget
The dream that haunts me yet,
OF PATIENCE NURSING HOPE—THE ANGEL AND THE CHILD.

IV.—THE HOLLOW OAK.

HOLLOW is the oak beside the sunny waters drooping;
Thither came, when I was young, happy children trooping;
Dream I now, or hear I now—far, their mellow whooping?

Gay below the cowslip bank, see the billow dances,
There I lay, beguiling time—when I lived romances;
Dropping pebbles in the wave, fancies into fancies;—

Farther, where the river glides by the wooded cover,
Where the merlin singeth low, with the hawk above her,
Came a foot and shone a smile—woe is me, the Lover!

Leaflets on the hollow oak still as greenly quiver,
Musical amid the reeds murmurs on the river;
But the footstep and the smile?—woe is me for ever!

V.—THE DESIRE OF FAME.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF THIRTY.

I DO confess that I have wish'd to give
My land the gift of no ignoble name,
And in that holier air have sought to live,
Sunn'd with the hope of Fame.

Do I lament that I have seen the bays
Denied my own, not worthier brows above,—
Foes quick to scoff, and friends afraid to praise,—
More active hate than love?

Do I lament that roseate youth has flown
In the hard labour grudged its niggard meed,
And cull from far and juster lands alone
Few flowers from many a seed?

No! for whoever with an earnest soul
Strives for some end from this low world afar,
Still upward travels, though he miss the goal,
And strays—but towards a star.

Better than fame is still the wish for fame,
The constant training for a glorious strife:
The athlete nurtured for the Olympian Game
Gains strength at least for life.

The wish for Fame is faith in holy things
That soothe the life, and shall outlive the tomb—
A reverent listening for some angel wings
That cower above the gloom.

To gladden earth with beauty, or men's lives
To serve with action, or their souls with truth,—
These are the ends for which the hope survives
The ignobler thirsts of youth.

No, I lament not, though these leaves may fall
From the seared branches on the desert plain,
Mock'd by the idle winds that waft; and all
Life's blooms, its last, in vain!

If vain for others, not in vain for me,—
Who builds an altar let him worship there
What needs the crowd? though low the shrine may be,
Not hallow'd less the prayer.

Eno' if haply in the after days,
When by the altar sleeps the funeral stone,
When gone the mists our human passions raise,
And Truth is seen alone:

When causeless Hate can wound its prey no more,
And fawns its late repentance o'er the dead,
If gentle footsteps from some kindlier shore
Pause by the narrow bed.

Or if yon children, whose young sounds of glee
Float to mine ear the evening gales along,
Recall some echo, in their years to be,
Of not all-perish'd song!

Taking some spark to glad the hearth, or light
The student lamp, from now neglected fires,—
And one sad memory in the sons requite
What—I forgive the sires.

VI.—NYDIA'S LOVE SONG.

(FROM "LAST DAYS OF POMPEII," BOOK III., CHAP. II.)

THE Wind and the Beam loved the Rose,
And the Rose loved one;
For who recks the wind where it blows?
Or loves not the sun?

None knew whence the humble wind stole,
Poor sport of the skies—
None dreamt that the Wind had a soul,
In its mournful sighs!

Oh, happy Beam! how canst thou prove
That bright love of thine?
In thy light is the proof of thy love,
Thou hast but—to shine!

How its love can the Wind reveal?
Unwelcome its sigh;
Mute—mute to its Rose let it steal—
Its proof is—to die!

VII.—THE SONG OF GLAUCUS.

(FROM "LAST DAYS OF POMPEII," BOOK III., CHAP. II.)

I.

AS the bark floateth on o'er the summer-lit sea,
Floats my heart o'er the deeps of its passion for thee;
All lost in the space, without terror it glides,
For bright with thy soul is the face of the tides.
Now heaving, now hushed, is that passionate ocean,
As it catches thy smile or thy sighs;
And the twin-stars that shine on the wanderer's devotion,
Its guide and its god—are thine eyes!

II.

The bark may go down, should the cloud sweep above,
For its being is bound to the light of thy love.
As thy faith and thy smile are its life and its joy,
So thy frown or thy change are the storms that destroy.
Ah! sweeter to sink while the sky is serene,
If time hath a change for thy heart!
If to live be to weep over what thou hast been,
Let me die while I know what thou art!

VIII.—THE BALLAD OF ROU.

(FROM "HAROLD," BOOK II., CHAP. I.)

I.

FROM Blois to Senlis, wave by wave, rolled on the Norman flood,
And Frank on Frank went drifting down the welter-ing tide of blood;
There was not left in all the land a castle wall to fire,
And not a wife but wailed a lord, a child but mourned a sire.
To Charles the king, the mitred monks, the mailèd barons flew,
While, shaking earth, behind them strode the thunder march of Rou.

II.

"O king," then cried those barons bold, "in vain are mace and mail,
We fall before the Norman axe as corn before the hail,"
"And vainly," cried the pious monks, "by Mary's shrine we kneel,
For prayers, like arrows, glance aside against the Norman steel."
The barons groaned, the shavelings wept, while near and nearer drew,
As death-birds round their scented feast, the raven flags of Rou.

III.

Then said King Charles, "Where thousands fail, what king can stand alone?"
The strength of kings is in the men that gather round the throne.
When war dismays my barons bold, 'tis time for war to cease;
When Heaven forsakes my pious monks, the will of Heaven is peace.
Go forth, my monks, with mass and rood, the Norman camp unto,
And to the fold, with shepherd crook, entice this grisly Rou.

IV.

"I'll give him all the ocean coast from Michael Mount to Eure,
And Gille, my child, shall be his bride, to bind him fast and sure;
Let him but kiss the Christian cross, and sheathe the heathen sword,
And hold the lands I cannot keep, a fief from Charles his lord."

Forth went the pastors of the Church, the shepherd's
work to do,
And wrap the golden fleece around the tiger loins of Rou.

v.

Psalm-chanting came the shaven monks within the
camp of dread;
Amidst his warriors Norman Rou stood taller by
the head.
Out spoke the Frank archbishop then, a priest devout
and sage,
"When peace and plenty wait thy word, what need
of war and rage?
Why waste a land as fair as aught beneath the arch
of blue,
Which might be thine to sow and reap?—Thus saith
the king to Rou:

VI.

"'I'll give thee all the ocean coast from Michael
Mount to Eure,
And Gille, my fairest child, as bride, to bind thee
fast and sure;
If thou but kneel to Christ our God, and sheathe thy
paynim sword,
And hold thy land, the Church's son, a fief from
Charles thy lord."
The Norman on his warriors looked—to counsel they
withdrew;
The saints took pity on the Franks, and moved the
soul of Rou.

VII.

So back he strode and thus he spoke to that arch-
bishop meek:
"I take the land thy king bestows from Eure to
Michael-peak,

I take the maid, or foul or fair, a bargain with the coast,
And for thy creed, a sea-king's gods are those that give the most.
So hie thee back, and tell thy chief to make his proffer true,
And he shall find a docile son, and ye a saint in Rou."

VIII.

So o'er the border stream of Epte came Rou the Norman, where,
Begirt with barons, sat the king, enthroned at green St. Clair;
He placed his hand in Charles's hand—loud shouted all the throng,
But tears were in King Charles's eyes,—the grip of Rou was strong.
"Now kiss the foot," the bishop said, "that homage still is due;"
Then dark the frown and stern the smile of that grim convert, Rou.

IX.

He takes the foot, as if the foot to slavish lips to bring;
The Normans scowl; he tilts the throne, and backwards falls the king.
Loud laugh the joyous Norman men—pale stare the Franks aghast;
And Rou lifts up his head as from the wind springs up the mast:
"I said I would adore a God, but not a mortal too;
The foot that fled before a foe let cowards kiss!" said Rou.

THE LADY OF LYONS.

1838.

EDWARD, LORD LYTTON.

MELNOTTE AND PAULINE.

(FROM ACT III., SCENE II.)

Claud Melnotte, a peasant, in the guise of a prince, marries Pauline, the Lady of Lyons, and takes her to his mother's cottage, where he tells her the circumstances which led up to his deception.

Mel. PAULINE, by pride
Angels have fallen ere thy time: by pride—
That sole alloy of thy most lovely mould—
The evil spirit of a bitter love,
And a revengeful heart, had power upon thee.
From my first years my soul was fill'd with thee:
I saw thee midst the flow'rs the lowly boy
Tended, unmark'd by thee—a spirit of bloom,
And joy, and freshness, as if Spring itself
Were made a living thing, and wore thy shape!
I saw thee, and the passionate heart of man
Enter'd the breast of the wild-dreaming boy.
And from that hour I grew—what to the last
I shall be—thine adorer! Well, this love
Vain, frantic, guilty, if thou wilt, became
A fountain of ambition and bright hope;
I thought of tales that by the winter hearth
Old gossips tell—how maidens sprung from kings
Have stoop'd from their high sphere; how love like death,

Levels all ranks, and lays the shepherd's crook
Beside the sceptre. Thus I made my home
In the soft palace of a fairy Future!
My father died; and I, the peasant-born,
Was my own lord. Then did I seek to rise
Out of the prison of my mean estate;
And, with such jewels as the exploring mind
Brings from the caves of knowledge, buy my ransom
From those twin gaolers of the daring heart—
Low birth and iron fortune. Thy bright image
Glass'd in my soul, took all the hues of glory,
And lured me on to those inspiring toils
By which man masters men! For thee I grew
A midnight student o'er the dreams of sages.
For thee I sought to borrow from each grace,
And every muse, such attributes as lend
Ideal charms to love. I thought of thee,
And passion taught me poesy—of thee,
And on the painter's canvas grew the life
Of beauty. Art became the shadow
Of the dear starlight of thy haunting eyes!
Men call'd me vain—some mad—I heeded not;
But still toil'd on—hoped on—for it was sweet,
If not to win, to feel more worthy thee? . . .
At last, in one mad hour, I dared to pour
The thoughts that burst their channels into song,
And sent them to thee—such a tribute, lady,
As beauty rarely scorns, even from the meanest.
The name—appended by the burning heart
That long'd to show its idol what bright things
It had created—yea, the enthusiast's name,
That should have been thy triumph, was thy scorn!
That very hour—when passion, turn'd to wrath,
Resembled hatred most—when thy disdain

Made my whole soul a chaos—in that hour
The tempters found me a revengeful tool
For their revenge! Thou hadst trampled on the worm—
It turned and stung thee! . . . Do not fear me.
Thou dost not know me, madam: at the altar
My vengeance ceased—my guilty oath expired!
Henceforth, no image of some marble saint,
Niched in cathedral aisles, is hallow'd more
From the rude hand of sacrilegious wrong.
I am thy husband—nay, thou need'st not shudder;—
Here, at thy feet, I lay a husband's rights.
A marriage thus unholy—unfulfill'd—
A bond of fraud—is, by the laws of France,
Made void and null. To-night sleep—sleep in peace.
To-morrow, pure and virgin as this morn
I bore thee, bathed in blushes, from the shrine,
Thy father's arms shall take thee to thy home.
The law shall do thee justice, and restore
Thy right to bless another with thy love.
And when thou art happy, and hast half forgot
Him who so loved—so wrong'd thee, think at least
Heaven left some remnant of the angel still
In that poor peasant's nature!

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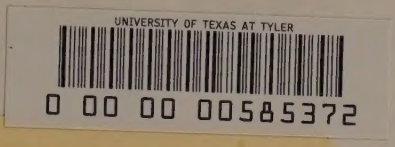

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